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IOB Study

Premises and promises

A study of the premises underlying the Dutch policy for women's rights and gender equality



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Preface

This report presents the findings of a desk study of existing research, including academic publications, reviews, grey literature and evaluations, etc. on the premises underlying the Dutch international gender policy. The report is part of a number of sub-studies of the policy evaluation on women's rights and gender equality conducted by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
Other sub-studies of this policy evaluation are the evaluation of the Netherlands and United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on gender, peace and security and the evaluation of the MDG3 Fund 'Investing in equality' (2008-2011).

Instrumental arguments for Dutch support to gender equality feature in various policy documents, including the Dutch international gender policy of 2011. Studying these policy documents has prompted IOB to find out what is known of the premises underpinning the instrumental arguments in said policies, and if these premises can indeed be linked to the intended, or promised, changes in gender equality and women's rights. In addition, a brief overview is provided of international experiences with institutional factors that have influenced the realisation of gender policies and gender mainstreaming.

Starting points for identifying relevant literature were recommendations from the reference group that was established for the gender policy evaluation and the study of Marleen Dekker of 2013 '*Promoting Gender Equality and Female empowerment: a systematic review of the evidence on property rights, labour markets, political participation and violence against women*'.

IOB sincerely hopes that this publication will encourage reflections and debates on the promises and their underlying premises of future gender policies, both in the Netherlands and outside.

This document was prepared by evaluator Paul de Nooijer together with researcher Kirsten Mastwijk.

The final responsibility for the content of this publication rests with IOB.

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List of abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DUAT	Right to Use and to Benefit of Land (*Direito de Uso e Aproveitamento da Terra*, Mozambique)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GENDERNET	DAC Network on Gender Equality
GPI	Gender Parity Index
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOB	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (*Inspectie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Beleidsevaluatie*, The Netherlands)
KST	Parliamentary paper (*Kamerstuk*)
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USD	United States Dollar
VAW	Violence against women
WHO	World Health Organization

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Introduction

Study of the Dutch international gender policy showed that it combines two lines of reasoning justifying attention to the issue of women's rights and gender equality. First of all, there are rights-based elements: equality of women and men is one of the fundamentals of society, or ought to be, and women have the same rights as men, or ought to have. This aspect is linked to a range of international conventions and agreements. Secondly, there have been instrumental arguments: equality and equal rights are better for economic growth, reducing poverty, increasing food security, governance that aligns with women's needs, etc.

The instrumental arguments appear in different policy documents but are most obvious in the Dutch international gender policy of 2011 (KST 32735-39 (2011)) that, among others things, includes the following observations:

- 'Equal rights and opportunities for women, their full participation in society and design making are of great importance for international security and stability, for welfare creation and stable growth'.
- '...it is proven that more women and a greater diversity contribute to better and better supported decision making and to more stable, sustainable societies'.
- It is important to involve women in resolving issues of peace and security because 'the specific needs and rights of women, their opportunities and capacities in the peace process and in reconstruction, are decisive for sustainable peace' ('*smart security*').
- 'Greater economic decision making power of women makes them self-reliant, gives them bigger control over resources, enhances their action radius and gives them the opportunity to have their voice heard in politics and governance. More economic power for women contributes to economic growth' ('*smart economics*').
- 'Awareness raising and credit programmes can contribute to the development of the economic potential of women and thereby promote food security and stable economic growth'.
- 'Establishing water and sanitation in neighbourhoods and close to schools increases the participation of women and girls in education and in the local community'.

This document summarises the results of a study of the premises underlying the Dutch policy for women's rights and gender equality. It is structured around the themes that are also covered in IOB's gender policy evaluation:

- Violence against women
- Educating women and girls
- Women as economic actors
- Women and land rights
- Women and water and sanitation
- Women's political voice

The document concludes with a brief overview of international experiences with respect to institutional factors influencing implementation of international gender policies. For an overview of the available publications on women, peace and security please refer to IOB's report '*Gender, peace and security – Evaluation of the Netherlands and UN Security Council resolution 1325*'.

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Violence against women

'Researchers, policymakers, and programmers are just beginning to understand what strategies may reduce gender-based violence in the long run' (Morrison et al. (2007): 41).

2.1 Introduction

Gender based violence, which is often synonymous for violence against women (VAW) (see text box 2.1), is an 'expression of unequal relations between men and women' (Oxfam (2012): 6). It includes 'a range of violent acts committed by males against females, within the context of women and girls' subordinate status in society, and often serves to retain this unequal balance' (Willman and Corman (2013): 6).[1] It is 'an intentional and systematic mechanism of social control which reinforces the subordinate status of women and girls and impedes women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms equally to men' (GDN et al. (2015): 27). What is more, the relationship between this kind of violence and gender *inequality* is often a reinforcing one (Bott et al. (2005): 8); violence against women is an 'extreme manifestation of gender inequality, and is the direct result of gender norms that accept violence as a way to control an intimate partner' (Pulerwitz et al. (2010): 283). According to a study of the UN Secretary General, VAW 'is not the result of random, individual acts of misconduct, but rather is deeply rooted in structural relationships of inequality between women and men'. These roots lie in 'historically unequal power relations and pervasive discrimination against women in both the public and private spheres' (UN (2006): ii, 21).

Text box 2.1 *What is gender based violence?*

The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women of 1993 defined violence against women as 'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life'.[2] The definition covers not only domestic or intimate partner violence but also physical, sexual and psychological violence within the family, girl child sexual abuse, female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation, rape and sexual abuse, early marriages, crimes against women committed in the name of honour, sexual harassment and structural violence in the workplace and educational institutions, custodial violence against women, forced sterilisation, trafficking in women, and forced prostitution.[3] Violence against women and girls in conflict situations is part of a wider continuum of violence that they experience already outside of conflict. It often reflects violence that already existed in the pre-conflict period.[4]

This chapter is structured as follows: it starts with a brief presentation on what international agreements have to say on VAW and what they have meant for national legislation on this topic. This is followed by a discussion of its universal prevalence and the identification of its causes, using the so-called 'ecological model'. Before summarising what is known of what works in addressing these causes, the chapter provides a brief overview of the consequences of violence against women.

2.2 The international framework and national legislation on VAW

A series of international agreements (see text box 2.2) demonstrates that violence against women is a violation of human rights. Starting points in this respect are General Recommendations #12 and #19 of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women of 1992. In Recommendation # 12 (1989), the Committee noted that all UN member states have the obligation to protect women from violence. It also asked them to include information on the incidence of violence and the measures adopted to confront it in their periodic reports to the Committee (UN (2006): 10). According to Recommendation #19, '(gender) based violence, which impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under general international law or under human rights conventions, is discrimination within the meaning of article 1 of the Convention (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1979)' (UN (2006): 10). As far as violence is concerned, CEDAW makes reference to e.g. prostitution and women trafficking, but does not include a specific provision on domestic violence or on sexual violence encountered in the public domain.

Text box 2.2 *International agreements on violence against women*

The ***Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action*** (1993) recognised violence against women in the private sphere as an abuse of human rights. It stated that 'the human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights'. It observed that the elimination of VAW in all areas of life, the public and the private, was central to the attainment of women's human rights.[5]

Likewise the ***Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*** (1993) recognised violence against women as a breach of human rights and made the state responsible to uphold the right to live free of violence. The Declaration realises that particular groups of women are especially prone to be targeted for violence (e.g. minority, indigenous and refugee women, destitute women). It requires states to condemn VAW and not to invoke custom, tradition or religion to avoid their obligations to eliminate such violence (UN (2006): 11).

The 1994 ***International Conference on Population and Development*** recognised that the elimination of violence against women is necessary for women's empowerment.

The ***Beijing Platform for Action*** of 1995 incorporates the agreement to 'Prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls'. Violence against women is one of its twelve areas of critical of concern. It also specified various forms of sexual assault on women that were not specifically mentioned in the Declaration of 1993.[6] Paragraph 69 of the outcome document of the special session on Beijing +5 furthermore called for the criminalisation of violence against women.[7]

The **Millennium Declaration** of 2000 which resolved '(to) combat all forms of violence against women' and to implement CEDAW.

In 2013, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) adopted the ***agreed conclusions on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls*** at its 57th session. Also in 2013, over two thirds of all members of the United Nations endorsed the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Violence against women is furthermore a core element of ***UN Security Council Resolution 1325*** (2000) and its sister resolutions that were adopted since (e.g. UNSCR 2106 and 2122 of 2013).

There is also a series of regional agreements, including the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (1994), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999), the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (2010), the Council of Europe Conventions on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (2010), and on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (2011).

The international normative framework, in particular CEDAW Recommendation # 19 of 1992, obliges states to take action to prevent VAW.[8] States have indeed increasingly ratified the relevant treaties. Moreover, over last two decades, many countries have incorporated these international agreements into their own legislation. They have put legislation in place to end VAW in all its different forms. As text box 2.3 shows, women's organisations have played an important role in this respect.[9] Women's rights activists and NGOs continue to use these international standards and norms on the elimination of VAW as 'lobbying tools and benchmarks for assessing government efforts to prevent, eliminate and redress such violence' (UN (2006): 23).

Text box 2.3 *Women's organisations and government response to VAW*

A frequently quoted study on the role of autonomous feminist movements on VAW policy is that by Htun and Weldon (2012), *The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975-2005*. Covering 70 countries, the study is based on scores for different dimensions of government response to VAW, i.e.:

- Government services to victims (government funding for shelters, rape crisis centres, crises services for other forms of violence);
- Legal reform (i.e. legislation pertaining to domestic violence, sexual assault/rape and other forms of violence);
- Policies and programmes target to vulnerable populations of women (i.e. support for women of marginalised groups, VAW as a basis for refugee status, protection of immigrant women in abusive relations from deportation);
- Training of professionals (police, nurses, social workers, etc.) who respond to victims;
- Prevention programmes financed by Government;
- Administrative reforms, i.e. presence of a Government agency on violence against women policies, etc.

Focusing on policy adoption, variation in government action and commitments to address VAW, the study concludes that 'feminist mobilization in civil society — not intra-legislative political phenomena such as leftist parties or women in government or economic factors like national wealth — accounts for variation in policy development' (Htun and Weldon (2012): 548). At the same time, the authors underscore that 'the study is not about how well governments implement their response, the degree to which they follow through on promises' or the 'degree to which legal reforms are incorporated into the practice of law, whether promised funds are actually allocated and fully spent, and the like' (Htun and Weldon (2012): 551). The study is also not about effectiveness or the reduction in rates of VAW that may be associated with these measures.

According to UN Women, 'as of 2012, 125 countries are reported to have laws penalizing domestic violence' (UN Women (2013): 8). A recent World Bank report gives a more nuanced picture however. It mentions that out of the 100 countries included in *Women, Business and the Law 2014*, 75 have criminalised domestic violence, 79 have legislation on sexual harassment in employment, 8 countries have legislation against harassment in public places, 38 have laws or provisions that criminalise marital rape and sexual assault within marriage and in 62 countries with no specific legislation, marital rape can still be tried under general rape legislation, unless a spousal exemption provision exists' (World Bank (2014): 75). An issue is furthermore that there may be contradictions between statutory legislation on violence against women and religious or customary laws resulting in non-application of the first. Changing the law is nevertheless 'only the first step in a long process' (Bott et al. (2005): 4,

20; Morrison et al. (2007): 35).[10] While legal sanctions can be important in reducing VAW, including by establishing normative frameworks and providing resources to address it, 'legal reform on its own is not sufficient to prevent violence against women and girls, and can have negative results' (DFID (2012a): 6).[11]

Many countries have also developed sector *policies* to address the needs of survivors of violence. International agreements as mentioned above, lobbying by international organisations and donors combined with advocacy by women's rights organisations have been instrumental in this respect.[12] These reforms indeed 'represent a significant symbolic achievement in the effort to strengthen women's rights and reduce violence against women' (Bott et al. (2005): 4).

However, the literature is also clear in its verdict that 'much remains to be done and that implementation of these laws and frameworks has been inadequate to date' (Heise (2012): 14).[13] Progress in the development of the international norms, standards and policies 'has not been accompanied by comparable progress in their implementation at the national level, which remains insufficient and inconsistent in all parts of the world' (UN (2006): 1, 19). Consequently, without 'sufficient implementing measures and a budget to monitor and seek enforcement, these laws have so far failed to demonstrate results' (De Silva de Alwis (2014): 13). Under these circumstances even progressive laws will be 'less useful' (Maguire (2012): 27).[14] In fact, 'no state in the world is effectively fulfilling its obligations to prevent violence against women and girls, protect women and girls from violence or provide comprehensive services to survivors' (DFID (2012a): 7). In many countries and for a variety of political, institutional, ideological and financial reasons, law enforcement institutions are under-funded, inaccessible, incompetent or even corrupt, Governments fail to budget resources, and police and judges are often unwilling or unable to enforce laws.

As a result, '(widespread) failures to enforce existing laws have been documented'.[15] Another consequence is that '(most) prevention activity worldwide continues to be driven by women's, children's and other civil society organisations, with limited resources' (Fergus (2012): 14). Moreover, even where good laws are in place, women are often unaware of their existence – or how to make use of them. They often face a lack of access to legal services, because of their high cost and high court fees, long and inefficient court processes, inaccessible court locations and language barriers. DFID in this respect also refers to 'the traditions, beliefs, norms and practices that operate within communities' as a 'major barrier to women's access to justice, protection and freedom from violence' and impunity and discriminatory treatment of women reporting violence within formal legal systems (DFID (2012b): 2).[16]

2.3 Prevalence

Despite all the international agreements and changes in national laws and policies, VAW remains a universal phenomenon. It can be found in every setting of the world and not only in situations of conflict or crisis and is 'one of the most widespread violations of human rights' (UN Women (2013): 12). Women experience violence across their lifespan, i.e. from childhood sexual abuse, sexual harassment at school and forced early marriage, to after their marriages.[17] Factors such as women's race, ethnicity, caste, class, migrant or refugee status, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or HIV status 'influence what forms of violence they suffer and how they experience it' (Fergus (2012): 6).[18]

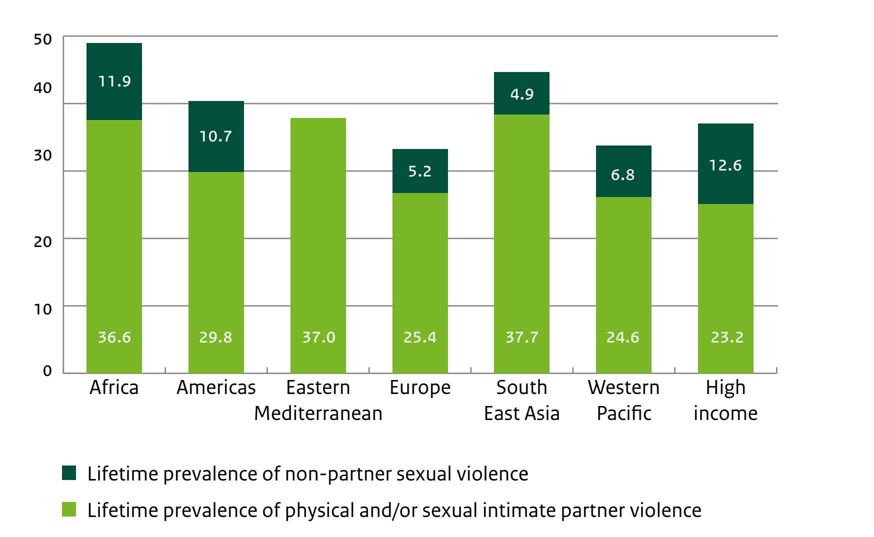
Contrary to common believe, most women who are victims of violence know the perpetrators, who often include intimate partners, stepfathers, fathers, other relatives, authority figures, teachers, and acquaintances. Intimate partner violence is the most common form of VAW[19] but often goes unchallenged, especially within the family.[20] Both males and females often justify such violence as acceptable. Rather than as criminal act, it is considered a 'normal' aspect of marriage and family life, expressing men's legitimate authority over women, or a 'private' matter outside the remit of the law' (Kabeer (2014): 4). Family bonds and economic and emotional dependence make prevention of and protection from VAW particularly complex.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), one in every three women over 15 years is confronted with physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence worldwide, although this share varies within and among countries (WHO (2013): 2, 16).[21] The highest rates (37%) are reported in Africa, eastern parts of the Mediterranean and South East Asia.[22] Country-wise, population-based surveys give figures between 10-70% or between 13 and 62% of women who report having experienced physical assault by an intimate male partner at some point in their lives.[23] Rates in countries like Uganda and Bangladesh are reported to be particularly high (Willman and Corman (2013): 6), i.e. more than 80% and 94% respectively. The Dutch national emancipation policy informs that 39% of all Dutch women had been a victim of sexual violence at one point in their life (KST 30420-180 (2013): 9).

Though high, these figures have to be interpreted with caution: real figures are probably higher because women do not (dare to) report such violence – because of the stigma associated with it – and/or do not seek external care or formal services in case these are available.[24] Such barriers 'to disclosing and reporting violence are exacerbated in conflict and crisis' (Spangaro et al. (2013): 17).

Figure 2.1 gives the percentage of lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by intimate partners and sexual violence committed by non-partners, divided by WHO region.

Figure 2.1 *Lifetime prevalence of violence against women (% of women affected)*



Source: WHO (2013): 16-17, 19.

2.4 Causes and consequences

Multiple factors increase the likelihood of gender based and intimate-partner violence in a particular setting. A framework for examining this combination of factors is the so-called 'ecological model', This model distinguishes multiple factors 'that contribute to perpetration of violence at various 'levels,' as well as 'the inter-relationship between the risk factors' (Fergus (2012): 18). This ecological model has gained broad acceptance and originates in public health approaches. It combines risk factors operating at four levels (see figure 2.2)[25] i.e. the individual, relationship (i.e. a person's closest social circle), the community context in which social relationships are embedded, and society, which refers to the larger, macro-level factors that influence sexual and intimate partner violence. Together, these factors determine the likelihood of abuse occurring. There are 'likely to be different constellations of factors and pathways that may converge to cause abuse under different circumstances' (Heise (2012)).[26] Gender inequalities are among these factors but 'intersect with other forms of inequality as well as variations in the larger political economy to differentiate the experience of violence for different groups of men and women' (Kabeer (2014): 9).

The fact that 'risk and protective factors operate at multiple levels' implies that 'to be effective, interventions will generally need to address factors at these different levels' (Morrison et al. (2007): 28). Using one intervention method or 'single sector responses' can achieve results 'but these will be limited' (DFID (2012a): 8).[27]

Figure 2.2 *Ecological model on causes of VAW*

Society

- Traditional/cultural gender norms that give men economic and decision making power over women in the household.
- Traditional gender norms that support/justify violence against women as an accepted way to solve conflicts or to punish transgressions.
- Women's lack of economic and legal rights.
- Government policies and laws that discriminate against women in all spheres.
- Impunity.
- High levels of crime.
- Armed conflict.

Community

- High neighbourhood crime rate.
- Weak community sanctions against violence.
- Missing or maladaptive teaching of alternatives to violence.
- Lack of shelters or other forms of assistance/sanctuary.
- Community poverty.
- Limited economic and recreational opportunities.
- Women's traditional gender roles.
- Normative use of violence to settle disputes.
- Social norms that restrict women's public visibility.
- Unsafe public spaces.

Relationship

- Association with gang members, delinquent or patriarchal peers.
- Marital instability and conflict.
- Family dysfunction and parental conflict.
- Male control of household decision making and wealth.
- Economic stress.
- Early age at marriage.
- Large number of children.
- Family honour considered more important than victim's health or safety.

Individual

- History of violence in the perpetrator's family (witnessing violence as a child; suffering violence as a child).
- Poor parenting practices.
- Alcohol or other substance abuse.
- Personality disorders.
- Low level of education.
- Unemployment, low income or low economic status.

Source: adapted from Morrison et al. (2007); WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010); Fergus (2012); Spangaro et al. (2013); Kabeer (2014).[28]

The impact of violence extends beyond the individual survivor, affecting children, households, workplaces, and communities. There are similarities in this respect between intimate partner and non-partner violence. In brief, it seriously limits women's ability to participate fully and share in the benefits of development and has 'a profound and enduring effect on their lives' (Abrahams et al. (2014): 6). This starts with violence occurring during the younger years, which 'can lead to negative consequences in many spheres of life, including educational and economic under-performance, unsafe sexual practices, reduced ability to bond as part of parenthood, increased uptake of health-risk behaviours (...) and the perpetration of intimate partner and sexual violence' (WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010): 15).

2.4.1 Health consequences

The health consequences of VAW 'are complex and multifaceted' (Duvvury et al. (2013): 6). The literature[29] shows that compared to non-abused peers, women who have been victims have higher rates of unintended pregnancies and abortions, are more likely to have a low-birth-weight baby; sexually transmitted infections, including HIV as well as higher rates of psychological outcomes such as post-traumatic stress syndrome, chronic pain syndrome, depression, hypertension, anxiety, sleep and eating disorders, and low self-esteem.[30] When violence occurs during pregnancy, it is furthermore associated with a higher incidence of miscarriages, pre-term births and stillbirths as well as obstetric complications. Women who have been victims are also more likely to be victims of homicide, suicide and femicide, i.e. the killing of females by males because they are females, which is considered the most extreme form of gender based violence, killing some 60,000 women per year (Willman and Corman (2013): 8).

VAW also has inter-generational consequences and 'has severe negative impacts on the emotional and social well-being of the whole family, with adverse effects on parenting skills and on educational and employment outcomes (of their children), contributing to early school dropout, youth offending and early pregnancy' (WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010): 5).[31] 'Children who witness violence against their mothers or other female care givers are at significantly higher risk of health problems (...), poor school performance and behavioural disturbance' and, especially in the absence of effective support, it can also 'influence their own behaviour and limit their capacity to imagine alternatives, potentially increasing the risk of future perpetration' (Fergus (2012): 6), although, not too much is known 'about the mechanisms through which early exposure to violence operates to increase risk of future perpetration' (Heise (2012): 5).

2.4.2 Economic costs

Over the years, several attempts have been made to estimate the financial and economic impact of VAW.[32] Different methodologies have been used to do so, relating to: (i) direct costs, including the costs of medical care, judicial and legal services, and social services; and (ii) indirect costs resulting from lost productivity in both paid and unpaid work, lost opportunities in domestic and external investment, and lost investments in human capital (Bott et al. (2005): 13).[33]

The majority of estimates come from developed countries (Duvvury et al. (2013): 1, 21) and tend to focus on direct costs; however, only a few reliable studies are available. These studies show that the aggregate costs of intimate partner violence are high.[34] Studies from the US and Australia refer to the impact of intimate partner violence on women's employment for higher levels of absenteeism, their ability to retain their job, more frequent job turnover and employment instability, lower earning capacity, limited occupational mobility, lower earning capacity and days lost from both paid work and household chores.[35] An issue with these studies is that different sources come up with different figures depending on what costs are included in these estimates and the accounting methodology that is used: there is no single method (Morrison et al. (2007): 31).

Still, there is general agreement that VAW poses significant costs for the economies of developing economies, 'including lower productivity and incomes, lower rates of accumulation of human and social capital, and the generation of other forms of violence both now and in the future' (Morrison et al. (2007) 30). Even 'the most conservative estimates measure the national costs of (violence against women) in the billions of dollars' (What Works (2014): 2). Still, little is really known of the size of the costs and of the macro-economic implications in developing countries.[36] The few studies that the literature quotes are from Latin America and concern Chile (1999), Nicaragua (1996) and Brazil (2007). They refer to economic losses as a result of violence against women equal to between 1.2 and 2% of their respective gross domestic product.

2.5 What works?

Response mechanisms to address VAW have included a range of interventions that were implemented by formal and informal institutions and civil society organisations in the security and justice, health and social sectors. Their aim was to ensure that women and girls suffering from VAW received support, affirmation and advice about options as well as medical attention, counselling, shelter and access to justice. In developing countries '(many) of the interventions emerged out of HIV programming, with the growing recognition of gender inequality and intimate partner violence as a driver of HIV infection' (Arango et al. (2014): 31).

Still, the knowledge base about what works to prevent VAW is limited, especially for developing countries. What *is* known primarily relates to some of the high-income developed countries (Arango et al. (2014): 1). But even here, while many public and private

organisations have made an effort to improve care for survivors, '(few) have demonstrated an impact on levels of violence or measured quantitative outcomes among survivors' and 'the most that can be said about certain approaches is that they are more or less promising' (Bott et al. (2005): 3, 4). The knowledge gained from the affluent North may not always be directly transferable to low and middle-income countries, where the evidence of effective approaches is limited. Even less is known of the effectiveness of interventions to address or prevent sexual violence in conflict or crisis (Spangaro et al. (2013): 2). The literature[37] refers in this respect to a 'lack of evaluations containing robust designs and quality implementation' in developing countries in general and fragile settings in particular. The available evaluations suffer from a broad range of methodological concerns.[38]

Though the evidence is growing, many gaps remain. As observed by the World Bank (2014), 'greater investment in documenting what works in developing countries is needed' keeping in mind that there is 'no single recipe' that 'will bring success across diverse social and geographical contexts' (World Bank (2014): 71). To address this caveat in knowledge on what works to prevent violence against women and girls, i.e. preventing violence from occurring, the programme called 'What Works To Prevent Violence' was set up. This is a global programme administered by a consortium led by the Medical Research Council of South Africa, in partnership with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Social Development Direct, on behalf of DFID.

Table 2.1 attempts to summarise what is known of the different types of interventions.[39]

Table 2.1 Approaches of what works – and what does not – in combating violence against women[40]

Type of approach	Fair evidence to recommend the intervention	Insufficient evidence to make a recommendation	Conflicting evidence that does not permit to recommend or advise against the intervention	Fair evidence to advice against the intervention
Police and justice sector responses	• Protection orders for victims or restraining orders for perpetrators	• Police and security personnel training and capacity building • Sex offender policies and disruption plans[41] • Community policing • Women's police stations or specialised response units[42] • Paralegal and community based legal interventions	• Pro-active arrest policies • Second responder programmes[43] • Specialised courts • Advocacy interventions that provide information and support to help access legal redress and resources in the community • Legal interventions in conflict or humanitarian crises	• Mandatory reporting and arrest requiring police to arrest in all cases of domestic violence • Requiring healthcare workers to report such violence to the police[44]
Crisis interventions	• Shelters[45]	• Hotlines • One stop centres		

Table 2.1 Approaches of what works – and what does not – in combating violence against women[40]				
Type of approach	**Fair evidence to recommend the intervention**	**Insufficient evidence to make a recommendation**	**Conflicting evidence that does not permit to recommend or advise against the intervention**	**Fair evidence to advice against the intervention**
Health sector responses			• Screening interventions with therapeutic intervention • Referral and case management	• Healthcare professionals' training and universal, routine screening interventions of women for experience of violence in health facilities • Requiring healthcare workers to report such violence to the police
Social sector interventions		• Counselling, therapy and psychological support • Alternative/ restorative justice mechanisms	• Advocacy and support to access services • Perpetrators' programmes	• Single component communication campaigns[46]
Prevention interventions	• Group based microfinance combined with gender-transfor-mative approaches[47] • Large scale social norm and community mobilisation interventions • Interventions targeting boys and men (alongside women and girls) through group education *combined* with community mobilisation in specific sectors (e.g. education, health) • Parenting programmes	• Alcohol reduction programmes • Whole school interventions • School-based curriculum interventions	• Bystander programmes	

Against the above background and given the great variation that exists between and within countries, recent literature calls for 'complex interventions' at 'multiple levels', addressing 'environmental and structural factors as well as working on individual level factors, such as gender attitudes and engaging with different audiences and stakeholders' (What Works (2014): 8-9) . The literature in this respect calls for[28]:

- Knowledge of the landscape – i.e. the overall setting in which violence occurs – on the basis of a thorough situational and gender analysis. Such analyses help to understand the different types of violence, population groups most affected, and the factors that drive the overall level of physical and sexual violence within the population in general and VAW in particular. They are vital for designing interventions that have a bigger chance of success (DFID (2012a): 5-6). The World Bank calls for 'understanding which attitudes are most directly linked with violence and identifying potential levers of change, including community, opinion and religious leaders' (World Bank (2014): 71).
- Use of a well-articulated theory of change that demonstrates e.g. how programme components deal with the different risk factors identified in the 'ecological model'. DFID emphasises the importance of 'a holistic approach', with 'coordinated interventions operating at multiple levels, across sectors and over multiple time-frames' and that recognises the link between prevention and response interventions (DFID (2012a): 8). Operating at multiple levels implies that engaging at the community level is essential for improving support to survivors of violence. DFID underlines the importance of community mobilisation to 'build a critical mass of individuals and groups who no longer tolerate violence against women and girls' (DFID (2012b): 11).[29] Targeting interventions to maximise potential impact (e.g. by focusing on the more severe forms of violence in a setting or on populations at higher risk) is recommended as well.
- Combine community mobilisation with awareness and advocacy campaigns rather than having these campaigns as a stand-alone effort, as was e.g. done by the 'We Can' campaign (DFID (2012b): 10).[30] Awareness campaigns, community engagement programmes, or communication and 'edutainment' through radio and television can help to break the silence about violence against women and contribute to a critical mass of pressure to convince key public sector stakeholders to take violence seriously.[31] However, they 'do not result in attitudinal or behavioral change by themselves' as they are 'typically not intense enough or sufficiently long-term transform norms or change behaviour' (Willman and Corman (2013): 31). In general, 'short-term and one-off interventions are less likely to show positive effects' on 'changing deep-seated norms and behaviours' (World Bank (2014): 74).
- Ensure a variety of interventions for different age groups: different types of violence affect women and girls across the various stages of this life cycle. The evidence also calls for particular attention to youth since '(young) people appear more open to changing their views about the acceptability of violence than older adults' (Bott et al. (2005): 6-7).[32]
- Design interventions that target both the general population (e.g. when dealing with social norms around acceptability of violence against women) and high-risk groups (such as youth).

- Design interventions that challenge discriminatory gender norms – i.e. explicit and implicit, formal and informal attitudes, social norms, beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and practices at all levels (i.e. from individuals to communities to institutions) – that condone or tolerate violence. This is a challenging and 'long-term process' that requires 'a sustained effort and a commitment to a human rights perspective' since it 'takes time to change deep-rooted norms and behaviours' (Bott et al. (2005): 6). As mentioned above, few short-term or one-off interventions have proven effective in reducing violence (Kiplesund and Morton (2014)).
- Seek to include men as appropriate: involving men in 'interventions that aim to empower women and reduce violence can be critical' (Solotaroff and Prabha Pande (2014): 200). This is about involving men 'as critical decision makers and potential agents of change' (Kiplesund and Morton (2014)) and about 'enlisting men as allies in women's rights advocacy and accountability work around violence against women and girls' (DFID (2012b): 17). Ricardo et al. (2011) found that studies provide evidence of effectiveness of interventions to improve boys' and young men's attitudes towards rape and other forms of violence against women, as well as towards rigid gender stereotypes that condone or allow this violence to occur. However, '(evidence) of effectiveness related to behaviours is less straightforward' and 'there is little evidence of the effectiveness of interventions to actually decrease boys' and young men's perpetration of violent behaviors in the long-term' (Ricardo et al. (2011): 5, 6). In relation to engaging boys and men, the World Bank moreover advocates for 'messaging that promotes and reinforces positive norms – such as showing men modeling equitable and non-violent behaviours' (World Bank (2014): 73). At the same time: 'There is evidence that programmes targeting men and boys are effective at tackling violence against women and girls only where they explicitly focus on transforming unequal power relations between women and men, including promoting alternative notions of masculinity' (DFID (2012a): 12).
- Improve monitoring, documentation of the implementation process, and evaluation and undertake rigorous impact evaluation, in view of the skewed distribution of evidence of what works mentioned above in favour of the high-income countries.
- Work with partners (women's organisations or women-led organisations) that represent local women, have a sound understanding of the context, power-holders and risks involved, have a history of working at the community level and in remote areas and a track record plus expertise of working on the subject, show a commitment to women's human rights; and have women in key decision-making positions within the organisation (DFID (2012b): 6, 7, 9). Social institutions – religious institutions, 'traditional', community and religious leaders, and 'modern' media – play a powerful role in influencing social norms and can be allies and opponents to shifting norms.

Notes

[1] Along the same lines, the UN Millennium Project Task Force on Gender Equality of 2005 observed that '(gender) inequality perpetuates violence against women, and violence against women restricts women's ability to use their capabilities and take advantage of opportunities, thereby reinforcing gender inequality' inequality' (UN Task Force Gender Equality (2005): 110). The study of the UN Secretary General of 2006 states: 'violence against women is a violation of human rights, rooted in historically unequal power relations between men and women and the systemic discrimination against women that pervades both the public and private spheres. The broad context from which it emerges includes disparities of power in the form of patriarchy, socio-cultural norms and practices that perpetuate gender-based discrimination and economic inequalities' (UN (2006): 131).

[2] The term 'gender based' is used to 'to highlight the links between violence against women and women's subordinate status' (Bott et al. (2005): 8; 14-15).

[3] See also Oxfam (2012): 5. According to the WHO, intimate partner violence also includes 'emotional abuse and controlling behaviours by a partner, such as not being allowed to see friends or family', although there is 'currently a lack of agreement on standard measures of emotional/ psychological partner violence and the threshold at which acts that can be considered unkind or insulting cross the line into being emotional abuse' (WHO (2013): 10). In its report there are 'measures of intimate partner violence solely include act(s) of physical and/or sexual violence' (WHO (2013): 10).

[4] Although men (and boys) are most often the perpetrators of rape and violence in armed conflict and women the victims, men (and boys) may also be subject to violence that is designed to 'shatter male power', with all the effects that come with it (increased rate of HIV infection, disruption of lives, damage to physical and psychological health, etc.) (El Jack (2003): 12, 16, 18). The literature indicates that it has been difficult to quantify the incidence of such violence as men are reluctant to speak out (El Jack (2003): 18).

[5] Another outcome was the appointment by the Commission on Human Rights in 1994 of a Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences.

[6] These include systematic rape and forced pregnancy during armed conflict, sexual slavery, forced sterilisation and forced abortion, female infanticide, and prenatal sex selection (UN Special Rapporteur (2009): 5). The strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 read as: (a) to take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women; (b) to study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures; and (c) to eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

[7] It also called upon states to take measures to address violence against women resulting from prejudice, racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia, pornography, ethnic cleansing, armed conflict, foreign occupation, religious and anti-religious extremism, and terrorism.

[8] The obligation for states to prevent violence against women and girls and to provide comprehensive services to survivors of such violence was established as a 'due diligence' standard by Recommendation #19 of the CEDAW Committee of 1992. It furthermore specifies that these rights and freedoms include: '(a) The right to life; (b) The right not to be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; (c) The right to equal protection according to humanitarian norms in time of international or internal armed conflict; (d) The right to liberty and security of person; (e) The right to equal protection under the law; (f) The right to equality in the family; (g) The right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health; (h) The right to just and favourable conditions of work'.

[9] See Bott et al. (2005): 4; Morrison et al. (2007): 33, 39; Oxfam (2012): 4. Legislation concerns e.g. the criminalisation of domestic violence and marital rape, eliminating provisions that allow perpetrators of rape to escape criminal sanctions by agreeing to marry the victims, and revising criminal procedures to make it easier to prosecute offenders.

[10] While '(some) qualitative data supports the view that legislation against (gender based violence), even without full enforcement, sends an important message about the non-acceptability of the behavior. However, this has not necessarily borne out in practice' (Willman and Corman (2013): 24).

[11] See also World Bank (2014): 77. As stated by the World Bank, a 'well-functioning justice system, with appropriate sanctions against violence against women, can help deter future violence and is an important element of prevention efforts' (World Bank (2014): 76).

[12] Bott et al. (2005): 4; Heise (2012): 14; UN Women (2013): 8.

[13] See also DFID (2012a): 7; GDN et al. (2015): 29.

[14] The study of the UN Secretary General of 2006 refers in this respect to 'a significant and unacceptable gap between the international standards on violence against women and the concrete commitment of political capital and resources to implement these standards' (UN (2006): 132).

[15] Bott et al. (2005): 4, 20; Morrison et al. (2007): 35; Fergus (2012): 12, 14; Maguire (2012): 27.

[16] See also GDN et al. (2015): '(one) of the key challenges is the failure to address institutional practices and broader social norms that reinforce and condone (violence against women)' (GDN et al. (2015): 30).

[17] According to the WHO, violence starts early in women's relationships and reaches a peak in the age group of 40-44 years with few data available for women who are 50 years or older, especially in low and middle-income countries (WHO (2013): 16). Willman and Corman (2013) refer to 'National Violence against Children Surveys estimating that 'among women 18-24 years old, 38% in Swaziland, 27% in Tanzania and 32% in Zimbabwe had experienced sexual violence before they were 18 years old' (Willman and Corman (2013): 6.

[18] See also the study of the UN Secretary General of 2006: 'While violence against women is universal and present in every society and culture, it takes different forms and is experienced differently. The forms of violence to which women are subjected and the ways in which they experience this violence are often shaped by the intersection of gender with other factors such as race, ethnicity, class, age, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, legal status, religion and culture' (UN (2006): 132).

[19] 'Sexual violence perpetrated by people, such as strangers, acquaintances, friends, colleagues, peers, teachers, neighbours, and family members is referred to as non-partner sexual violence. In developed countries a greater proportion of violence is mutual but the health consequences of men's violence remain more severe for women' (Abrahams et al. (2014): 1).

[20] Worldwide, men experience higher levels of physical violence than women as a result of war, gang-related activity, street violence, and suicide.

[21] According to the WHO, around 7% of women worldwide have experienced violence by a non-partner, with the highest rates reported in high-income countries (12.6%) and Africa (11.9%), and the lowest prevalence was found for the South-East Asia (4.9%) (WHO (2013): 18).

[22] According to the WHO, 38% of all murders, i.e. 'the extreme manifestation of existing forms of violence against women' and 'the ultimate act of violence which is experienced in a continuum of violence' are committed by intimate partners (WHO (2013): 2).

[23] See e.g. Bott et al. (2005): 10 and United Nations (2013): 3. There is considerable data variation since different definitions of 'violence' are used and researchers use different questions and timeframes and different sample characteristics. This makes it difficult to compare research findings (Bott et al. (2005): 9).

[24] Spangaro et al. (2013) in this respect refer to 'Fear of retribution, by the perpetrators or others, punishment, shame, disruption to community and family support, instability, and the break down in law and social services, coupled with a lack of confidence in systems, opportunities, and confidential responses, all contribute to under-reporting' (Spangaro et al. (2013): 17). See also Abrahams et al. (2014): 5 and WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010) stating that, 'the occurrence and

impacts of intimate partner and sexual violence are frequently 'hidden' resulting in a significant underestimation of the real level of harm caused' (WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010): 5). Cross- country comparisons are furthermore difficult to make because of differences in measurement. These differences may relate to (1) the scope of violence, (2) the definition of violence, (3) the means by which violence is measured, (4) the survey instrument, (5) the scope of the population studied, (6) the representativeness of the sample selected, and (7) country-specific considerations' (Day et al. (2005): 5).

25 See e.g. Bott et al. (2005): 14-15; United Nations (2006): 37-38; 60; Morrison et al. (2007): 26; Heise (2012): 3; and Fergus (2012): 18.

26 As a result, 'the same set of genetic, personal history and situational factors (such as abuse in childhood, a proclivity toward impulsiveness, and having too many drinks) may be sufficient to push a particular man toward partner violence in one socio-cultural and community setting, but not in another' (Heise (2012)).

27 Legal reform is a good example. Despite laws that criminalise marital rape at the level of 'society', marital rape is still widely practised at the 'relationship' level in a number of countries because social norms at the level of 'relationship' have not sufficiently changed (DFID (2012a): 8).

28 Also see http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/647-key-theoretical-models-for-building-a-comprehensive-approach.html.

29 See e.g. Bott et al. (2005): 12; UN (2006): 58-59; Morrison et al. (2007): 32-33; ICRW (2007): 7; WHO (2009): 11; WHO (2010): 16,17; WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010): 3, 15; Fergus (2012): 5; Duvvury et al. (2013): 6-8; Abrahams et al. (2014): 6; Spangaro et al. (2013): 18; WHO (2013); Kabeer (2014): 19-20.

30 On the complex relationship between HIV and violence against women and the different pathways involved see WHO (2009): 1-2, 9, 10. According to WHO (2013) women who have been physically or sexually abused by their partners are 1.5 times more likely to acquire HIV in some regions.

31 See also Heise (2012): 5-6.

32 See e.g. UN (2006): 181-190 for a summary of different studies. See also Day et al. (2005), which provides a summary overview of the research done on the economic costs of gender-based violence. Pages 12-13 provide an overview of categories and examples of such costs.

33 Day et al. (2005) distinguish between: (i) direct tangible costs (i.e. actual expenses paid, e.g. for hospital and shelter staff); (ii) indirect tangible costs (e.g. lower earning and profits coming from less productivity); (iii) direct intangible costs (which have no monetary value, e.g. pain and suffering); and (iv) indirect intangible costs (which also have no monetary value, e.g. negative psychological effects on children who witness violence) (Day et al. (2005): 6-7). As stated by the World Bank, unless violence against women, as a critical constraint on agency, is addressed 'women cannot take full advantage of potential economic opportunities' (World Bank (2013): 2).

34 Estimates for the UK were close to USD 34.5 billion per year (2004); for Australia they were estimated at USD 8.1 billion, while in the case of the US they ranged between USD 3.5 and USD 12.6 billion (2002) (ICRW (2007): 4). The differences are explained by the different types of costs that are included in the estimates.

35 ICRW (2007): 4-5; Durruvy et al. (2013): 11.

36 Estimating the economic costs in developing countries is difficult for amongst others the following reasons: (i) the lack of services (or serious under-funding of services) generally means that direct cost estimates associated with gender-based violence will be low, giving a mistaken impression that that the problem is not important; (ii) the coexistence of formal and informal structures of health provision and economic activity; as well as (iii) minimal information technology and record-keeping, and difficulties with data collection.

[37] These methodological concerns are e.g.: (i) insufficient control for biased results leading to an over-estimation or under-estimation of effects; (ii) lack of comparable control groups; (iii) evaluations that were conducted only at the conclusion of an intervention and therefore failed to capture fade-out effects or results that could emerge 6 or 12 months later; and (iv) evaluations were often based on self-reporting, by women and/or men, with the two sides not always agreeing on what happened in reality, in other words a discrepancy that 'puts in question the actual attainment of behavior change and the reliability of outcomes based on self-reporting' (Arango et al. (2014): 39). See further Morrison et al. (2007): 44; WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010): 37; Fergus (2012): 4; Arango et al. (2014): 30, 39. Also Heise (2012) observes that 'the field benefits from several decades of practice based learning that has been systematized into various 'best practice' documents; however, rigorous evaluations are largely lacking on how effective these programmes have been in actually reducing violence' (Heise (2012): 4). Berg and Denison come to the same conclusion in their systematic review of interventions to reduce the prevalence of female genital mutilation/cutting in African countries, i.e.: 'that there is a paucity of high quality evaluations of the effectiveness of interventions to reduce the prevalence of FGM/C' (Berg and Denison (2012): 79). According to Fulu et al. (2014): 'while many intervention evaluations show an impact on risk factors related to violence such as attitudes, school attendance, sexual practices, alcohol use, harsh parenting and others, evaluations that demonstrate a significant impact on women's experiences or men's perpetration of VAWG are still relatively rare' (Fulu et al. (2014): 33).

[38] See also Fulu et al. (2014) stating that '(even) where interventions did demonstrate an impact on VAWG, the findings are often inconsistent. For example, we are yet to see an intervention that has effectively reduced both men's perpetration and women's experiences of violence, with evaluations tending to report a change in one but not the other' (Fulu et al. (2014): 33).

[39] For an overview of what works to reduce violence against women in conflict and post-conflict zones and other humanitarian crises in lower and middle-income countries see Spangaro et al. (2013). The authors refer e.g. to provision of firewood, alternative fuels and patrols during firewood collection; multi-strategy interventions; medical care plus post-trauma counselling improved functioning for women and participation in groups and building networks with other women who have experienced trauma may reduce stress. Legal interventions were not associated with reduced risk.

[40] Adapted from Jewkes (2013); What Works (2014); Jewkes (2014); Morrison et al. (2007); Willman and Corman (2013); WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2010); Heise (2012); Fulu et al. (2014); World Bank (2014).

[41] Ex-offender policies stipulate that sexual offenders should be recorded on a register and barred from having contact with children. This is done by vetting people who work with children across a range of settings from schools to playgroups to foster parents. Disruption plans use surveillance measures and information about risky adults' association with vulnerable children to 'disrupt' abuse attempts without involving the child (Jewkes (2014): 10).

[42] Evaluations have demonstrated the following issues: (i) female officers have not automatically demonstrated better attitudes toward victims of violence simply by virtue of their sex; (ii) they have often been severely underfunded: officers have received inadequate training, and stations have lacked equipment, transportation, and other key resources; (iii) when working well, their efforts are often undermined by other parts of the justice system that are unwilling or unable to enforce the law; (iv) they often encourage regular police stations to abdicate responsibility for crimes against women (Morrison et al. (2007): 37).

[43] Second responder programmes entail a follow-up visit (after the initial police response to domestic violence) – usually by a specially trained domestic violence police officer and a civilian domestic violence advocate (Jewkes (2014): 10).

[44] This is in line with one of the guiding principles mentioned in the study of the UN Secretary General of 2006, i.e. to '(maintain) the confidentiality and privacy of the victim/survivor' (UN (2006): 115).

45 According to the study of the UN Secretary General of 2006, '(while) the State may not always be the best provider of such shelters, it is good practice for the State to assist, encourage, finance and cooperate with NGOs in establishing and maintaining them' (UN (2006): 118).

46 These are short-term campaigns that focus on one particular issue only.

47 According to Heise (2012), 'the role of economic factors on women's risk of violence appears to be complex, context-specific and contingent on other factors (such as partner's employment or education). Current research suggests that economic empowerment of women in some situations can perversely increase the incidence of partner violence, at least in the short term. This seems especially common in situations where a man is unable to fulfil his gender-ascribed role as 'bread-winner' and a woman is beginning to contribute relatively more to family maintenance, or where a woman takes a job that defies prevailing social convention' (Heise (2012): 7; also DFID (2012a): 14). Along the same lines, '(findings) suggest that microfinance schemes can have either a positive or negative effect on a woman's risk of partner violence, depending on other aspects of her situation' (Heise (2012): 7). Also Kabeer (2014) refers to mixed findings (Kabeer (2014): 12) while Willman and Corman (2013) observe: 'Increasing income for women provides greater agency and power in household decision-making, but may also trigger resentment if they are perceived as 'disempowering' to male partners' (Willman and Corman (2013): 13).

48 See e.g. What Works (2014); Solotaroff and Prabha Pande (2014): 200, 214; Fulu et al. (2014); DFID (2012a); DFID (2012b); Kiplesund and Morton (2014); Spangaro et al. (2013); World Bank (2014): 71-79.

49 Working at local level requires acquiring the buy in of local (women) leaders to gain acceptance of culturally sensitive programmes, reducing the risk of backlash; building strong relationships with communities and regular consultations through the programme cycle; anticipating and responding to the risk of backlash against women organising at community level; sustaining partnerships beyond a single programming cycle; taking into account that formal service provision may be weak or absent or difficult to reach because of specific barriers women may face (finance, mobility constraints) (DFID (2012b): 5).

50 Along the same lines, Spangaro et al. (2013) recommend that '(interventions) should be multifaceted, incorporating as relevant: survivor care, community engagement, systems and security, personnel and infrastructure measures. Community consultation on needs, preferences and risk factors should be undertaken before and during implementation' (Spangaro et al. (2013): 106).

51 According to Heise (2012), larger-scale 'edutainment' or campaign efforts coupled with efforts to reinforce media messages through street theatre, discussion groups, cultivation of 'change agents' and print materials. Both these strategies have demonstrated modest changes in reported attitudes and beliefs – and in some cases, reductions in reported rates of partner violence (Heise (2012): 5).

52 The World Bank argues the focus on youth from another perspective: a multi-country study showed that youth tended to report a higher justification of violence against women than older respondents, 'underscoring that much more work is needed to change norms and attitudes among youth' (World Bank (2014): 72).

3

Women's education

'Women's education is probably the single most important policy instrument to increase agricultural productivity and reduce poverty' (Quisumbing and Meinzen-Dick (2001): 1).

3.1 Introduction

A series of international conventions and agreements emphasises women's right to education, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. It is also incorporated in CEDAW (1979) and the 1990 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and a core element of the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All of the same year. Also the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) underscores the importance women's training and education in several of its strategic objectives. Women's right to education was recognised in the follow-up World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000 as well as in MDG3, which talks about eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015.

Following a brief presentation on the state of affairs with respect to women and girls' participation in education, this chapter focuses on the theoretical underpinnings of the importance of gender equality in education. It underlines the importance of women's education for women's empowerment in a broad range of areas, i.e. from employment, to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), increasing women's voice in the family and reducing gender-based violence. Still, there is a need for 'caution in assuming that the effects of education can be taken for granted or that they will be uniform across all contexts' (Kabeer (2005): 18).

3.2 Developments and state of affairs

Data from the UN's Millennium Development Goals Reports shows that girls' enrolment in *primary education* has continued to increase during the first decade of the new Millennium. By 2012, all developing regions have achieved, or were close to achieving, gender parity in primary education. The gender parity index (GPI) grew from 91 in 1999 to 97 in 2010. Southern Asia stands out in overall progress. Figures remain lower in Sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia, despite the increase in gross enrolment of girls from 72 to 96% and from 87 to 97% respectively. Although more girls are now in school in Sub-Saharan Africa, only 93 girls are enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys. In parallel with this increase in school enrolment, the number of out-of-school children – mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia – declined from 106 million in 1999 to 69 million in 2008 and 61 million in 2010 as mentioned in UNESCO's EFA Global monitoring report 2012. Overall, girls represent an estimated 53% of these children; this share varies across regions, with the highest share reported for Northern Africa.

Primary school *attendance* of girls and boys is nearly equal in the richest households and in urban areas; however this is not the case for girls from poor households in rural areas, where, for many reasons (school fees, lack of safe school environment, early marriage practices, etc.), girls leave early. Girls from the poorest households continue to face the highest barriers to education: being poor, female, living in rural areas[1] or a conflict zone increases the probability that a child will be out of school. In Sub-Saharan Africa, only 23%

cent of poor, rural girls complete their primary education, though when kept in school, girls tend to outperform boys.

The gender gap in school enrolment widens when moving to *secondary education*. Gender disparities associated with poverty and rural residency are also larger at this level of education, also for girls from wealthier households.[2] In the poorest households, about twice as many girls of secondary-school age are out of school compared to their wealthier peers. The GPI in secondary education in the developing world as a whole was 96 in 2010 but only 82 in Sub-Saharan Africa and 91 in Western and Southern Asia. According to the World Bank, '(the) number of countries with girls disadvantaged in secondary education is similar to the number with boys disadvantaged' (World Bank (2011): 108).

Worldwide, women outnumber men in *tertiary education* in 62% of the countries; between 1970 and 2008 'the number of female tertiary students increased more than sevenfold (from 10.8 million to 80.9 million), compared with a fourfold increase among males' (World Bank (2011): 108). The ratio of girls' to boys' enrolment went from 96 in 1999 to 108 in 2007, though, once more, with substantial regional disparities. By 2012, the overall GPI in tertiary education was 98 but rates were lower in Sub-Saharan Africa (63), Southern Asia (76) and Western Asia (89). In contrast, young women in the Caucasus and Central Asia, Eastern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Africa and South-Eastern Asia have higher enrolment ratios than young men. In general, countries with lower levels of national wealth tend to have more men enrolled in tertiary education than women, while the opposite occurs in countries with higher average income. Tertiary education completion rates also tend to be lower among women than men and women continue to be overrepresented in the humanities and social sciences and are significantly underrepresented in science, technology and, in particular, engineering.[3]

In 2010, 122 million people between 15 and 24 years of age (of which 74 million women) were unable to read and write a short, simple statement about their everyday life. Gender gaps in youth literacy rates are at the same time narrowing. However, literacy rates continue to be worse for women than for men, especially in South Asia and East and North Africa (Elborgh-Woytek et al. (2013): 8). According to GDN et al. (2015), '(over) recent years, women's literacy has barely progressed at all and has attracted very little investment' and women account for almost two-thirds of the world's 774 million illiterate adults (GDN et al. (2015): 53).

Reasons for the failure to achieve gender parity in education are varied and context-specific – and generally well known. They include[4]:

- Demand side issues such as the direct costs of sending girls to school even when countries have instituted free universal primary education[5], demand for girls' domestic labour in the household, socio-cultural norms and traditions (e.g. early marriage); and
- Supply side issues such as lack of accessible and safe school infrastructure and of qualified and committed (female) teachers, gender stereotyping in curriculum[6] and textbooks and teachers reinforcing societal perceptions towards girls.[7]

3.3 Importance of education to women and girls

The importance of girls' education has first of all been argued from a human rights perspective: girls have a right to be included based upon their entitlements as citizens (Calder and Huda (2013): 2). This is e.g. also evident from the title of the Dutch education policy document of 1999: *Education, A basic human right*. This position finds it origins in the international conventions and agreements mentioned above.

A second argument has been instrumentalist: girls' education is key to a range of economic and social development aims. According to Quisumbing and Meinzen-Dick (2001), '(improving) women's education is probably the single most important policy instrument to increase agricultural productivity and reduce poverty'.

While the benefits of education vary and are context-specific and depend on the quality of the education that is provided[8], generally, they are higher for girls than for boys, especially after completing secondary education (Levine et al. (2008): 16-17).[9] Moreover, '(the) benefits of investing in girls are amplified and sustained in the next generation' (Levine et al. (2008): 19). A critical reflection is at the same time given by Duflo (2012). She argues that the evidence that educating girls has 'tremendous spill over effects' is not as strong as commonly believed. 'More needs to be learned about this, the automatic presumption that female education is more important than male education for child mortality and for other children outcomes may need to be revised: it seems that both matter' (Duflo (2012): 1066).[10]

Looking at the *economic* aspects, studies[11] confirm the importance of girls' education for gross domestic product and macro-economic growth and that female education has a larger impact on growth than male education (World Bank (2007): 108). Gender inequality in education impedes economic growth and income generation.[12] Cross-country evidence shows that gender inequality in education accounts for a sizable portion of the empirically observed growth differences between countries and regions' (Blackden et al. (2006): 6). It has impact, directly, through lowering the average quality of human capital, and indirectly, through its impact on investment and population growth.[13] According to the World Bank, major drivers of women's increased labour force participation and earnings in the Latin America and the Caribbean region 'include increased investments in education alongside the decline of fertility and delays in marriage' (World Bank (2013): 8).

Using cross-country and panel regressions covering the period 1960-2000, Klasen and Lamanna (2009) found in this respect that:

- Gender inequality in education reduced economic growth in the 1990s;
- Gender inequality in education in the Middle East and North Africa and the South Asia region continues to harm growth in that region but by decreasing amounts; and
- Gender inequality in labour force participation (as a proxy for gender gaps in employment) has a sizable negative impact on economic growth (Klasen and Lamanna (2009): 117).

Educated women are furthermore more likely to enter the formal labour market, where earnings exceed those of informal or home-based work, though Darkwah (2010) based on a

study in Ghana makes the case that getting access to what ILO defines as 'decent work' and 'whether or not an educated girl will grow up to become an empowered woman' (Darkwah (2010): 13) is context-specific – education alone will not be enough.[14] Women's education raises agricultural productivity with most farmers being women in developing countries.[15]

Looking at the issue of *social impact* and other dimensions of human development, the literature[16] indicates that there is strong evidence on the importance of women's and girls' education for improving health outcomes on general health status, maternal health and mortality, child immunisation and child and infant health and mortality, and SRHR including HIV/Aids and the prevalence of female genital mutilation (IOB (2011e): 31-34).[17] Moreover, it is important for reasons of family planning, delaying marriage (see text box 3.1), reducing family size, reducing risk behaviour and lowering fertility rates.

Education is also found to have an empowering effect on women's voice in the family and their participation in public life and for reducing the incidence of violence against women (UN Millennium Project (2005): 39-40; Kabeer and Natali (2013): 35); education inequalities, including low levels of literacy for women, are significant barriers to participation (Moosa et al. (2013): 468).

Text box 3.1 *Child marriages*

According to Parsons and McCleary-Sills (2014b), 'child marriage is closely linked to poverty and girls' educational opportunities'. It is 'a practice that robs women of agency on a number of fronts. Not only are girls often coerced into arrangements against their will, the effects of being married at a young age tend to include lower levels of education and long-lasting health problems as a result of early pregnancies' (De Silva de Alwis (2014): 22; OECD/DAC (2010): 4). In 18 of the 20 countries with the highest prevalence of child marriage, 'girls with no education are up to six times more likely to marry than girls with a secondary education' and 'girls living in poorer households are almost twice as likely to marry before the age of 18, compared with girls in higher-income households'. Not surprisingly, net enrolment in primary education is, on average, lower in countries with high levels of early marriage (OECD/DAC (2010): 4).

While already CEDAW (1979) calls on all countries to take necessary action to eliminate child marriage and encourages lawmakers to set the minimum age for marriage to 18 years, the practice of child marriage continues in many countries, even despite local laws that regulate age at marriage. Its high prevalence 'is both a symptom and a consequence of poverty' and is 'driven by social norms and expectations and by gender discrimination that devalues women and girls and their right to make choices for themselves' (Parsons and McCleary-Sills (2014b)). Parsons and McCleary-Sills (2014b) highlight that programmes and strategies must address multiple social and economic drivers to delay marriage and that it is 'also critical to provide individual and family-level resources within interventions' (Parsons and McCleary-Sills (2014b): 4-5). There is a need for strengthened legal and policy frameworks, to ensure increased awareness of and changes in attitudes on early marriages, as well as greater enforcement of existing laws.

At the same time, there is no evidence that educational expansion has reduced social and economic inequalities. As mentioned by IOB, 'the impact of education on socio-economic, gender or ethnic equality is not necessarily of the magnitude or direction that one might hope for' (IOB (2011e): 27). Access to education in itself 'is insufficient to overcome a variety of important contextual causes of exclusion that sustain existing inequalities' (IOB (2011e): 28, 43). Moreover, whether, despite the positive aspects referred to above, education leads to women's empowerment is not certain (Kabeer (2005): 18). As observed by the World Bank's Operations Evaluation Department in 2005, '(studies) have shown that growth helps reduce poverty where there is more education and higher literacy rates, but where education levels are low, the link is negligible. In addition to investing in women's human capital, therefore, it is critical that women participate more in economic activities to reduce poverty and enhance women's welfare overall' (World Bank Operations Evaluation Department (2005): xiv; 47).

3.4 What works?

To address the many issues related to educating girls, a range of strategies has been implemented both on the demand side and the supply side. These have ranged from the abolition of school fees, introducing stipends for girls, community sensitisation on the importance of girls' education, to the recruitment of female teachers, teacher training, the development of girl-friendly teaching and learning materials and the construction of girl-friendly schools.

On what works, table 3.1 gives an overview of different types of interventions – that can be used in combination[18] – for which there is either strong or promising evidence of girls' participation in education, their learning outcomes and, finally empowerment.[19]

Table 3.1 Summary of evidence of what works for girls in education

		Participation	Learning outcomes	Empowerment
Resources	Cash interventions targeted at populations most in need and at grade levels where drop-out is most likely to have an impact on girls' participation (if these are seen to be objective and fair).[20]	++	++	-
	In-kind resource interventions.[21]	+	-	-
	Information about employment returns to schooling.	++	-	-
Infrastructure	Provision of additional schools in underserved areas.[22]	++	+	-
	Integrated water, sanitation and hygiene interventions.	+	-	-
Institutions and policy	Formal and informal teacher training in subject content, (gender sensitive) pedagogy, management, gender equality and to develop attitudes of inclusion and tolerance.	++	+	+
	Girl friendly schools.	++	+	+
	Classroom level group learning.	++	++	++
	Learning through formal informal extracurricular activities.	-	++	++
	The involvement of women in school governance and community mobilisation and in community leadership.	+	+	+
	Gender mainstreaming as an approach to changing institutional cultures may have a positive impact provided that adequate resources are allocated.	+	-	-
Norms and inclusion	Teaching about personal, social and health issues linked with sex education both at school and in complementary programmes.	+	+	+
	Women's literacy programmes, in case they offer women and girls to develop gender awareness, literacy knowledge and skills and spaces for reflective discussion.	+	+	+
	Interventions that seek to enhance the capacity of poor or marginalised women and girls to participate in discussing school practices and reflecting on their experience.	+	-	+
	Supporting young women to proceed to higher levels of education.	+	-	-

Legenda: ++ *= strong evidence;* + *= promising evidence;* - *= no evidence.*

Notes

1 Inequalities between males and females for access to and completion of education and what they learn during the process remain acute among the world's poor, especially in rural areas (see e.g. Nallari and Griffith (2011): 56 -57; Bachelet (2012): 72; Grown (2014): 160).

2 This is linked to a range of cultural attitudes and practices that promote early marriage, son preference, encourage the seclusion of young girls or attach greater value to educating boys than girls can create formidable barriers to gender parity as well as the costs of education, especially for the poor (United Nations (2012): 21).

3 According to the World Bank (2011) '(there) has been less success in addressing stream divergence because many barriers need to be lifted at the same time – households, markets, and institutions need to change simultaneously, through complex polices that act on multiple fronts' (World Bank (2011): 107).

4 See e.g. Calder and Huda (2013).

5 This refers to the costs of e.g. school uniforms, transport, textbooks, etc.

6 Based on research on secondary education in Honduras, Murphy-Graham (2008) emphasises the need to open the 'black box' of education content (the 'hidden curriculum' that often reflects prevailing social attitudes and prejudices) and processes since 'not all forms of education will necessarily serve as 'resources' for empowerment' (Murphy-Graham (2008): 32).

7 See also Levtov (2014) underlining that national curriculum can 'reinforce existing social and gender inequalities by implicitly upholding traditional gender stereotypes or by disregarding the diversity of learning needs and learning styles among girls and boys throughout the country' and that '(addressing gender biases in textbook and curriculum is an important avenue towards equality within education' (Levtov (2014): 6-7).

8 See e.g. Kabeer (2005): 17; Calder and Huda (2013): 2; Behrman et al. (1999); Hanushek and Woessmann (2007) and Cooray (2009); IOB (2011e): 15.

9 On e.g. the case of Bangladesh see IOB (2011d): 99.

10 Duflo's critique is that '(although) an association between education of mothers and the outcomes of their children has been found over and over again, the evidence, in most cases, suffers from obvious biases: educated girls come from richer families and marry richer, more educated, more progressive husbands. As such, it is, in general, difficult to account for all of these factors, and few of the studies have tried to do so' (Duflo (2012): 1065-1066).

11 See e.g. Centre for Economic and Business Research (2008); Lewis and Lockheed (2008); Hanushek and Woessmann (2007); Hanushek (2008); Levine et al. (2008); and Chaaban and Cunningham (2011).

12 See e.g. Baliamoune-Lutz and McGillivray (2007): 4-5.

13 See also IOB (2011e): 27, 74; Baliamoune-Lutz and McGillivray (2007): 2; Klasen (1999): 23 and Dollar and Gatti (1999): 21.

14 See also Murphy-Graham (2008): 45-46; Kabeer (2011): 5.

15 On the link between education and agricultural productivity see e.g. Croppenstedt et al. (2013): 23-24.

16 See e.g. Rose and Subrahmanian (2005); Lewis and Lockheed (2008); Levine et al. (2008); Hanushek (2008); Baliamoune and McGillivy (2007); Calder and Huda (2013) and Patrinos (2008); Nallari and Griffith (2011): 11; World Bank (2011): 106.

17 See also UN Millennium Project (2005): 37-41; Hargreaves and Boler (2006): 25-26, 31-32; Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 5; Kabeer and Natali (2013): 35; Blackden et al. (2006): 4, 7; World Bank (2007): 110-111; World Bank Operations Evaluation Department (2005) : 41.This was also confirmed in the case of

Bangladesh showing that: (a) women's education was a significant determinant in household diet quality and protein intake (together with income, household composition and prices of protein-rich commodities); (b) increased education could play a significant role in lowering the gender wage gap as it allowed women to move out of low productivity and into higher productivity and more skilled occupations (IOB (2011d): 18, 39).

18 Lessons from World Bank impact evaluations of education programmes suggest 'that sustained impact on education — from higher rates of enrolment to increased attendance and lower dropout rates — requires multi-level programmes' (Parsons and McCleary-Sills (2014a)).

19 The table is based on the systematic review of Unterhalter et al. (2014): 2-6. See further World Bank (2003): 12-13.

20 Conditional cash transfers are more effective as is clear from Parsons and McCleary-Sills (2014a).

21 Promising are: (i) iodine supplements to pregnant women where iodine deficiencies are prevalent; (ii) deworming; (iii) school feeding programmes (though with a possible negative effect on learning in crowded classrooms).

22 Particularly where safety concerns associated with distance to school are significant.

4

Women and economic development

'The challenge is to reach poor women who are landless labourers, smallholder agricultural producers, cross-border traders and factory and domestic workers and ensure that these women have access to the opportunities and benefits of economic growth and trade' (GENDERNET (2011): 10).

4.1 Introduction

According to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1979, 'discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of the prosperity of society and the family and makes more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity'. This is further elaborated upon in a series of CEDAW's articles (e.g. Article 3, 11, 13, and 14). Likewise, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action provides six strategic objectives that relate to women's economic rights (see text box 4.1). At the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Summit in 2010, member states called 'for action to ensure the equal access of women and girls to education, basic services, health care, economic opportunities and decision making' and stressed that 'investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth'.[51] On the other hand, the MDGs themselves are not very specific on the issue of women's economic empowerment, with only MDG1 referring to 'Achieve Decent Employment for Women, Men, and Young People'. There are also several ILO Conventions that promote women's rights in employment.[2]

Text box 4.1 *Six strategic objectives on women and the economy from the Beijing Platform for Action (1995)*

1) Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.
2) Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.
3) Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.
4) Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.
5) Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.
6) Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. First of all, it includes a presentation on the importance of reducing gender equality from an economic development perspective and the link between economic development and gender equality. This is followed by more focused sections on what is known of what works for women in small-scale enterprise development, women and access to micro credit and development in women's employment. The chapter then discusses the role of women in agricultural development and in international agricultural value chains. The issue of women's land rights is tackled separately in the following chapter.

4.2 Women and economic development

4.2.1 General picture

It is undisputable that women make a major contribution to economic welfare through large amounts of unpaid work that often remains unseen and unaccounted for in gross domestic product. There is also 'ample evidence that when women are able to develop their full labour market potential, there can be significant macroeconomic gains', also in developing countries.[3] In the long term, women's employment has the potential to increase women's assets, to shift the balance of power within the family and to lead to their greater independence in household decision making. It may furthermore lead to greater investments in the health and education of their children.[4] As Stotsky (2006) argues '(there) is a simultaneous relationship between gender inequalities and economic growth. Gender inequalities reduce economic growth while at the same time economic growth leads to lower gender disparities' (Stotsky (2006): 49-50).[5] The Global Gender Index reports observes that progress closing the gender gap in economic participation is slow: in 2014 only 60% of the economic outcomes gap was closed, compared to 59% in 2010 (Hausmann et al. (2010): 7, 19 and Hausmann et al. (2014): 12).

Various studies (e.g. Ferrant (2011) and IDRC (2013)) find that a persistent gender inequality accounts for some 16% of the difference in per capita income between South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific. There is also evidence that gender inequality in its various dimensions – from inequalities in education to gender gaps in access to and control over key economic assets – 'plays a significant role in accounting for the poor growth performance in Africa' (Blackden et al. (2006): 1, 6).[6] On a more positive note, higher levels of gender diversity in companies can furthermore drive up productivity and innovation, have a positive impact on a company's relations with the community, increase sales by getting greater insights into consumer preferences (IFC (2013): 2-3, 9, 12, 14, 22-23). The overall effect is 'likely to differ by sector, region, the individual company and the type of strategy on women's employment' (IFC (2013): 10). The literature furthermore demonstrates that women's participation in the labour market on an equal footing with men could boost economic growth by mitigating the impact of a shrinking workforce in rapidly ageing economies. It allows companies to better tap the available talent pool and increase production and productivity.[7]

The reasoning is furthermore that when such employment is outside the agricultural sector – and provided that it does not erode women's health or exploits their labour – access to paid work, also from home, can increase women's agency – i.e. their capacity to make strategic choices (Kabeer (1999): 437).[8] However, much depends on whether women's education translates 'into employment opportunities and on the kind of employment opportunities available to them' (Kabeer and Natali (2013): 35) (see text box 4.2). An issue is furthermore that women's increased participation in the labour market has not been accompanied by changes in the gender division of unpaid labour at the home front: women continue to take care of the children and the elderly, plus domestic activities such as food production, collection of fuel wood and water, etc.[9]

Text box 4.2 *Does Paid Work Provide a Pathway to Women's Empowerment?*

Based on research done in Bangladesh, Kabeer et al. (2010) find that 'it is the *kind* of paid work that women do, rather than the *fact* of paid work, that influences women's voice, agency and relationships both within the home, and to some extent, outside it'.[10] The very small minority of women in formal/semi-formal employment reported the 'most positive changes' on retaining some control over their income, their ability to move around in the public sphere unaccompanied, as well as increased recognition within the community. Although women also engaged in informal work outside the home reported a number of positive outcomes, 'their greater poverty and the less favourable working conditions partly offset the transformative potential of their work' (Kabeer et al. (2010): 30). According to the report, paid work 'is not the only route to positive forms of change in women's lives'; (post primary) education, regular TV watching and doing work that is valued by the family (e.g. in civil society organisations) were found to be significant factors in promoting women's agency and empowerment (Kabeer et al. (2010): 31, 35-36).

In brief, there is a strong instrumental rationale or 'business case' for ensuring women's participation in economic growth – apart from a rights or equality perspective.[11]

On the other hand, the link between gender equality and economic growth is a complex one and 'asymmetrical', keeping in mind that what *de facto* constitutes women's empowerment varies considerably by country context and even within a country (Kabeer (2011): 2). The evidence that gender equality, particularly in education and employment, contributes to economic growth is far more consistent and robust than the evidence that economic growth contributes to gender equality in health, wellbeing and rights (World Bank (2007): 107). The impact of economic growth on gender equality appears far less consistent and there is 'no guarantee that growth on its own will address critical dimensions of gender equality' (Kabeer and Natali (2013): 3, 34-36, 38).[66] Likewise Duflo (2012) recognises that on its own, economic development 'is not enough to bring about complete equality between men and women' in the foreseeable future and 'policies will be required to accelerate this process' (Duflo (2012): 1556, 1063).[67]

4.2.2 Women and access to finance – the case of micro-credits

As reflected in e.g. ILO (2014), '(one) of the main challenges female entrepreneurs face is limited access to finance. On average, women have less access than men to basic financial services including checking and savings accounts, as well as to formal credit; they are substantially 'credit-constrained' (ILO (2014): 2, 4).

In relation to what is known on women's access to credit, IOB (2014b) indicates that women have been a main target group of micro-finance initiatives. Women are often among the poor; they are better in repaying loans and are thought to realise better results than men. Since they have less access to the labour market, starting their own business using credit

can be a way out of poverty. However, 'literature reviews of empirical research on the impact of microfinance on the poor found controversial (and inconclusive) findings' (Stewart et al. (2010): 14; World Bank (2013): 38). They point out that:

- There is often little more than anecdotal evidence of the positive impact of micro finance;[14]
- The poorest of the poor often hardly benefit; and
- There is a real chance that micro finance has a negative impact for this group: per definition they live in a fragile environment in which micro credit can bring about limited change (see further text box 4.3).[15]

There has also been critique on the inability of micro-finance programmes to move women into profitable non-traditional forms of entrepreneurship (Nallari and Griffith (2011): 132).

Text box 4.3 *Women and micro-finance – on impact*

On the impact of micro-finance for women, Stewart et al. (2010) indicate that there is some evidence that:

- *Micro-savings* for women have a significant impact on their individual expenditure;
- Increased food quality is due to increased food expenditures, which increased significantly for women who are clients of micro-credit programmes; and that
- Micro-credit is empowering women, although this is not consistent across the reviewed studies.

Studies on women's empowerment (e.g. greater control over the earnings from the business) are, with one exception, 'inconclusive'.[16]

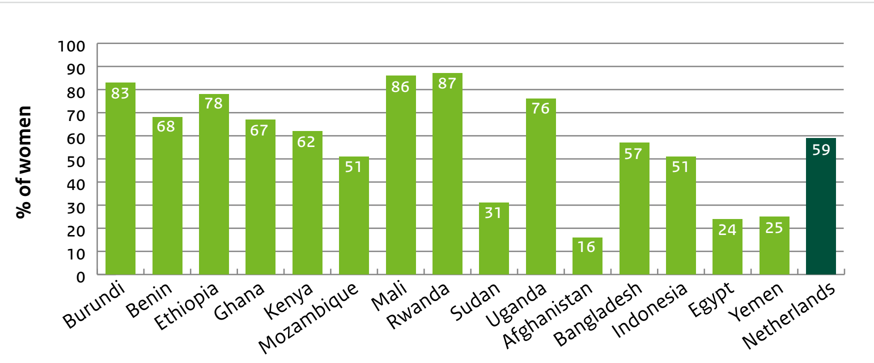
Also the systematic review of Yoong et al. (2012) concludes that '(findings) for micro-credit remain highly controversial and inconclusive', mixed and contradictory and that the impacts by gender of micro-credit 'are more ambiguous' (Yoong et al. (2012): iv, 31-32). Likewise a recent ODI review states that 'the majority of studies looking at micro-finance as a single intervention found that it has no effect on female bargaining power in the household, expenditure on female goods or on children, or even on female health outcomes like more knowledge of how to avoid sexually transmitted infections or a decrease in unwanted pregnancies. In many cases, though, microfinance is not offered as a stand-alone intervention'. However, '(other) components, such as business training are built into it and are often not considered within the evaluation' (Taylor and Pereznieto (2014): 35). The prevailing disagreement over the benefits of micro-credit programmes is partly due to different ways of measuring impact (Esplen and Brody (2007): 3).[17]

Another recent study on the effects of micro-credit on women's control over household spending in developing countries aimed to assess the causal relationship between micro-credit and specific dimensions of women's empowerment and the mechanisms which mediate this relationship (Vaessen et al. (2014): 8, 17). It found that, based on studies deemed comparable and of minimum acceptable quality, that there was an 'overall lack of evidence for an effect of microcredit on women's control over household resources'. Henceforth, it was 'very unlikely that, overall, micro-credit has a meaningful and substantial impact on empowerment processes in a broader sense' (Vaessen et al. (2014): 10, 80).[18] Another observation is that '(from) the identified mechanisms at work we can conclude that the way in which micro-credit is delivered, in combination with the given gender relations context, seem to determine to a large extent whether or not microcredit can make a difference for women's decision-making power and control over resources in the household' (Vaessen et al. (2014): 82).

4.2.3 Women's labour market participation

While the role of women for economic development is recognised and differences in male and female labour market participation have narrowed, these same labour markets remain highly divided along gender lines with differences across regions. The share of women in paid employment has increased only marginally in recent years due to the financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009. Globally, women's share in paid jobs outside of the agricultural sector increased from 35% in 1990 to 40% in 2012. Overall, women's labour force participation has stagnated over the last two decades at some 55%, with considerable variation across regions and countries (World Bank (2013): 1).[19] According to the UN, the gender gap in employment is most acute in Northern Africa, Southern Asia and Western Asia, where women are far less likely to be employed than their male counterparts. The differences in the employment-to-population ratio between men and women in these three regions approached 50 percentage points in 2012 (UN (2013): 9; UN (2014): 11). At the same time, the data in figure 4.1 shows that many of the Dutch partner countries in Africa outperform the Netherlands.

Figure 4.1 *Women's labour market participation rate in (former) Dutch partner countries (2012)*



Source: United Nations (2013); United Nations (2014).

Women's labour market participation remains curtailed by a broad range of social, cultural, legal, regulatory and political restrictions in parts of the world.[20] According to the World Bank, the fact that gains in women's economic opportunities continue to lag behind their capabilities is inefficient and not 'smart economics'.

When women *are* employed in paid work, they are confronted with the following issues:[21]

- Women are more likely to have informal jobs in both formal and informal enterprises and thus lack social protection and / or entitlement to employment benefits such as paid annual or sick leave.
- Women are over-represented in the lower echelons of the informal sector (especially in services and in traditionally lower value-added production sectors).
- Due to their lower levels of skills, women are less mobile than men regarding labour migration, even though they are now migrating in larger numbers than ever.
- Women are more likely to be engaged in vulnerable employment as either unpaid workers who contribute to a family business or own-account workers. In either case they are unlikely to benefit from safety nets that guard against income loss during economic hardship.[22]
- Women perform temporary, seasonal and unregulated work, often under unsafe and unhealthy working conditions that are incompatible with international labour standards.[23]
- Women are generally less well paid than men (the 'gender pay gap' that is observed in both the formal and informal sectors[24]) and face more barriers in reaching top-level occupations – a phenomenon that is well known in the Netherlands as well.
- Women have a bigger chance of being unemployed, they are more likely to be made redundant with the introduction of new technologies, have little social protection and they remain disproportionally vulnerable to the effects of economic crisis.[25]
- Women experience multiple discrimination and exclusion because of factors such as ethnicity or caste: they are not a homogeneous or undifferentiated group that lives outside social reality.

The above arguments and 'business case' have not meant that, among OECD/DAC members or within the World Bank, gender equality and women's empowerment have received the same attention in economic and productive sectors as it did in others.[26] According to OECD, using the gender marker, while shares of bilateral aid that targeted gender equality and women's empowerment in the social sectors were quite high, it was much smaller in aid targeting gender equality in the economic and productive sectors (OECD (2014)). This state of affairs is not very different from what was observed by Pinder or in an issues paper of GENDERNET of 2011.[27]

4.3 Women in agriculture and food security

4.3.1 General picture

While the situation varies considerably across countries, the overall picture is clear. Women:

- are major food producers and play a vital role in enabling food security at the household level. This is recognised in e.g. the Comprehensive Framework for Action that was produced by the UN High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (2008), the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security (2009), the Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action of the High Level Task Force on the global food security crisis (2010) and in the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (2013);
- represent a large share of the world's farm workers, albeit with wide variations within and among countries;
- are highly dependent on agriculture for survival; and
- provide a large proportion of the labour needed to bring food to the table in developing countries.[28]

Women work in agriculture as farmers on their own account, as unpaid workers on family farms and as paid or unpaid labourers on other farms and agricultural enterprises. They are involved in both crop and livestock production at subsistence and commercial levels, producing food and cash crops and managing mixed agricultural operations often involving crops, livestock and fish farming (FAO (2011): 7).

What is more, in many parts of the world, married women and men have distinct roles and activities, including separate crops, agricultural plots, and agricultural tasks (see e.g. FAO et al. (2010b): 13-19). Roles and tasks are context-specific though in practice the division may be blurred, with men preparing 'women's plots' and women involved in weeding 'men's crops' (BRIDGE (2014): 16). Traditionally, women are responsible for producing locally important staple crops and provide most of the labour in the production of non-traditional agricultural exports. Women moreover provide most post-harvest labour, arrange storage, and take care of handling, stocking, processing, and marketing of the produce. Women's role in agriculture is moreover expanding: in some regions the out-migration of young men from rural areas, conflict and the HIV/aids pandemic have led to permanent changes in women's responsibilities and tasks.[29] Nevertheless, men still largely control the sale of crops and animals and use of the income. With the increasing commercialisation of agriculture, the dominant position of men is changing gender roles – in men's favour.[30]

At the same time, women's full potential in agriculture remains un(der)utilised as a result of the following gendered constraints:[31]

- Not having secure rights in the land they cultivate plus constraints when protecting these rights (see further chapter 5) in addition to the size, and at times, also the quality of women's land holdings.
- Less access to and lower use of key agricultural inputs such as: (hired) (male or family) labour; livestock; fertilisers; water and irrigation; technology and tools; extension

services and information on new agricultural practices and inputs (e.g. improved varieties and pest control measures)[32]; marketing infrastructure, including financial services such as savings, credit (for which often collateral (such as land) is needed, of which women have less); and insurance. The often held assumption that when such inputs are channelled through men they will trickle down to the household does not hold, 'particularly when men and women perform different tasks or even grow different crops' (Croppenstedt et al. (2013): 27) and when women do not control the proceeds of the sale of their produce.[33] Poor access to such resources results in poor access to profitable cash crops, prevents women farmers from diversifying, limits their prospects for generating cash income and reduces chances of participating in agricultural value chain development.

- Little account is taken of women's role in livestock production, fisheries and aquaculture as well as agro-forestry – both for interventions and agricultural research.
- Women have a greater overall workload that includes low-productivity activities like fetching water and firewood[34] and, when employed, are more likely to be in part-time, seasonal and low-paying jobs, getting less pay than men for the same work.
- Another constraining factor is women's limited membership of and participation in farmers' associations and other types of organisations and related decision-making structures and processes.[35] Such organisations, cooperatives and worker unions 'are generally controlled and managed by men' and women have less voice and decision-making power (FAO (2011): 51). Still, they 'can be an effective means of building social capital and addressing gender gaps in other areas as well, through reducing transactions costs, pooling risks, developing skills and building confidence' and 'a stepping stone to closing the gender gap in participation in other civil society organizations and government bodies' (Croppenstedt et al. (2013): 29).

The resulting gender gap in these respects differs across countries, but is reinforced by social/cultural/religious restrictions in public participation and mobility and in performing certain tasks that are considered 'male'.[36] Following a gender-neutral approach to economic interventions, assuming that 'economic opportunities are equally available to women and men alike' implies that the 'uneven playing field on which people live' is overlooked (World Bank (2013): 34). This makes it unlikely in many instances that women will be able to benefit from the same interventions on an equal footing with men.

Unequal access to one or several of the above production factors and the resulting differences in input levels explain the lower yields on women's farms: on average these may be 25% lower than those of male farmers.[37] The shortfall in use of such inputs together with limited control over resources 'may be reasons for agricultural segregation, the concentration of women in lower-value, less-marketed crops' (Croppenstedt et al. (2013): 36).[38]

According to the FAO, when women's constraints are reduced they could raise yields on their farms by 20 to 30%, raise agricultural output in developing countries between 2.5 to 4% and thus make a substantial impact on food output and food security globally.[39] It would also have 'important additional benefits through raising the incomes of female farmers, increasing the availability of food and reducing food prices, and raising women's

employment and real wages' (FAO (2011): 3, 39, 42, 43). DFID (2014a) underlines however, that '(whilst) it is possible to draw some conclusions about the relationship between agricultural growth and women and girls' well-being, data limitations and weaknesses in the existing evidence-base and the contextual nature of gender relations make it difficult to generalise across countries and to accurately estimate the magnitude of effects' (DFID (2014a): 5).

4.3.2 Women and value chains

As in other areas, women's roles in agricultural value chains will differ between commodities, locations and over time (Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 34). The literature indicates that 'underlying patterns of asset ownership and control condition men's and women's ability to participate in and benefit from value chain projects' (Quisumbing et al. (2014): 2).[40]

Nevertheless, various reports[41] show that such gender issues are often ignored in value chain interventions. While much of the farm work done on contracted plots is performed by women as family labourers, men control the contracts and receive and control the income that is generated.[42] As a consequence, women 'do not reap the full benefits of their labor as family work is often unpaid or inadequately remunerated' (Maertens and Swinnen (2009): 16). As the literature shows, such increases in cash income for men 'do not necessarily translate into gains for all the household members and can even lead to a loss of welfare and nutritional status for some' (Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 34). Again, the situation differs between commodities, contexts and over time which 'illustrates the importance of looking closely at gender relations and structural factors when pursuing value chain development' (Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 36).

In practice, women are usually concentrated in less profitable and less visible areas of the value chain – especially in nodes that require relatively unskilled labour.[43] They lack secure control over land, family labour and other resources required to guarantee delivery of a reliable flow of produce (e.g. Chan (2010): 12).[44] The job segregation that is observed is 'deeply rooted in global and local social constructs and perceptions of what is considered appropriate male and female work' (Staritz and Reis (2013): 7, 24).[45] There is moreover conflicting evidence that participation in high-level contract farming has been accompanied by decreased access to resources for female farmers concerned with subsistence food production. The situation is different for women employed through off-farm wage work; in this case the women are contracted and receive a wage.

As observed by Riisgaard et al. '(assuming that) women will automatically gain from generic value chain interventions can have unintended negative consequences'. Moreover, 'these interventions are not sufficient in themselves to secure (…) meaningful welfare outcomes for women when working in 'gender conservative' areas' (Riisgaard et al. (2010): 52). Furthermore, studies on supply chains indicate that they may contribute to gender inequality because of discriminatory practices in the labour market: women have lower wages, have unstable, temporary, seasonal jobs and are more often unemployed during winter months, etc. (Maertens and Swinnen (2009): 20-21; FAO et al. (2010c)) – though this

is not the case everywhere. This underlines the importance of socially responsible sourcing practices and the adoption of corporate codes of conduct. In this respect it has been observed that '(there) is growing evidence that women working for exporters directly engaged with the value chain's lead firms have better work conditions and greater wage equality than those who work on family holdings or for smaller, independent outgrowers' (Staritz and Reis (2013): 24). Still, literature on the gender implications of modern value chains is not abundant.

KIT et al. (2012) argue the importance of attention to gender equity in certified value chains from three main perspectives: rights and social justice, poverty reduction – which is hard 'if you're (gender) blind' – and instrumental arguments.[46] It talks in this respect about '(a) mutually beneficial and iterative relationship between standards and certification on one hand and gender issues on the other (which) is beginning to materialize. This relationship is two-pronged: improving gender dynamics improves chain performance; and certification offers specific mechanisms that facilitate addressing gender' (KIT et al. (2012): 257). Main reasons are that:

- When women are not informed on agricultural practices, standards and certification – e.g. because women do not participate in training or information meetings and (informed or trained) men do not pass on the message to women – this presents a 'serious risk' to certified production and the certificate may be lost (also Agarwal (2011): 16); and
- When women do not get equal benefits, are not rewarded for the additional effort needed for organic production, or have little opportunity to participate in decision-making at household, community or producer organisation level, they are less interested in complying with standards and in taking care of the crops – which, in turn, hampers the expansion of production of certified products.

The report underlines the importance of including women 'at operational and management levels in all links of the chain', the involvement of female extension officers, and the training of farmers in gender as these 'can also act as role models for other female farmers'. The report also talks about the incorporation of gender indicators into existing standards in order to be able to identify 'the different positions, constraints, opportunities and benefits available to men and women' (KIT et al. (2012): 248, 251).

4.4 What works?

Still the picture of what works, where, how and under what conditions is far from clear. What is more, what works in one setting may not work in another. As observed by ODI, the literature on economic empowerment 'is narrowly focused on direct outcomes of women's economic participation rather than their broader empowerment impact'. It rarely explores 'how women's diverse characteristics, identity and experiences account for differential empowerment outcomes' and fails to 'account for differences in context when presenting their results, which may explain some of the ambiguous and inconclusive findings'

(Domingo et al. (2015): 61). Also in the area of trade liberalisation is the literature on the impact on gender inequality in e.g. employment, income, health and education still scarce (Aguayo-Tellez (2011): 22-23).[47]

On what – possibly – works for women running small-scale enterprises, Buvinic and Furst-Nichols (2014) conducted a review of evaluations (mostly relying on randomised control trials). These evaluations concerned interventions that gave women access to capital and savings accounts, business management training, on-the-job and skills training, and job vouchers.[48] They used women's productivity and earnings as proxies for the more complex notion of economic empowerment. The review also examined the timing of outcomes and how long-lasting they were, and the cost-effectiveness of interventions. Their findings indicate[49]:

- Interventions seem to work best when women micro and small producers and entrepreneurs have economic independence or autonomy and few social restrictions.
- To make sure that they can keep their income, and protect the privacy of their choice on how to spend it, the use of 'mobile money' is important.[50] It may provide women with sufficient autonomy and independence from social pressures to invest in the business rather than in the extended family. Moreover, the use of mobile phones makes access to financial services less costly; it may also improve access to market information.
- Capital in-kind works better than cash for more successful and larger women-owned small enterprises (i.e. with 5-19 employees) since it 'seems to nudge women to keep the money invested in their businesses' (Buvinic et al. (2013): 5, 31). A precondition is that the amount is large enough and women are given sufficient time to show results.[51]
- Capital alone, whether cash or in-kind, is insufficient for subsistence-level firms. Very poor women need a more intensive package of services to break out of subsistence production and to be able to reap the benefits of higher productivity and earnings. They require a sufficiently large capital transfer paired with business training and follow-up technical visits – but silver bullets of how to realise this do not exist.[52]
- Business training, which is more cost-effective than customised advice, works better for women-owned SMEs rather than micro-enterprises. There is a need to target motivated, self-selected women entrepreneurs to increase its impact. At the same time, as for men, such training has few measurable effects on business survivorship or profits for women. Independent of the quality of the training, short courses are likely to have less impact.[53]
- Savings are a promising way to improve rural women's productivity and increasing their business earnings, especially for more risk-averse women. They may particularly benefit the smallest, subsistence-level women entrepreneurs and women with little household decision-making power.
- Access to childcare increases women's wage employment levels and earnings, but design and delivery matter to ensure quality, affordable and cost-effective care.[54]

Table 4.1 summarises the above for different groups of women, taking into account that 'the same class of interventions (has) significantly different outcomes depending on the client or beneficiary'.

Table 4.1 Summary of evidence of what works for economic empowerment of women[55]

Target group	Proven/being proven	Promising	High potential	Unproven
All	• Savings • Land rights/land titling • Child care for wage workers	• Mobile phones (for financial transactions and market information) • Information on land rights • Farmer associations and networks	• Farmer field schools • Firm certification • Non-traditionally female job skills training for wage workers	
Non-poor	• Credit • Business management training	• Modern agricultural inputs (e.g. improved seeds, fertiliser, irrigation)		
Non-poor and poor		• Consulting services for entrepreneurs		
Poor		• In-kind capital tailored for women micro-entrepreneurs • Integrated services for farming		Skills, on-the-job training and/or wage subsidies for unemployed
Poor and very poor	• Bundled services: In-kind capital (large) + asset-specific training & technical assistance • Rural electrification			Micro cash loan or grant alone
Very poor				Business management training alone
Young women	• Demand-driven job services: skills training, internships, vouchers, and/or subsidies • Conditional cash transfers	• Livelihood programmes (reproductive health + asset building + safe spaces) • Un-conditional cash transfers	• Information on jobs (through mobile phones) • Mentors and role models	

Proven/being proven = Evidence for effectiveness or cost-effectiveness is robust or, in the absence of cost-effective data, simple and replicable in different settings, or weight of evidence is more than promising; Promising = Credible evidence is positive, but not yet convincing for breadth; High potential = Intervention has been largely untested but promising on conceptual grounds; Unproven = Intervention has not been effective for the particular category of women in the specific settings where it has been evaluated.

Furthermore, O'Sullivan et al. (2014), identifies ten policy priorities to narrow the gender gap in African agriculture distinguishing based on available evidence between promising – for which existing evidence indicates a high potential for success – and emerging

interventions, which may benefit from further testing (see table 4.2).[56] It is to be kept in mind in this respect that 'not all women are the same, and that large variations in their age, marital status, education level and size of holding require more specific targeting than just differentiating between men and women farmers' (Hazel (2014): 16).

Table 4.2 Promising and emerging policy options to narrow the gender gap in African agriculture

	Promising policy options	Emerging policy options
Land	Formalise women's land rights through registration to increase tenure security[57]	Reform family and inheritance law to protection women's rights[58]
	Expand co-titling and individual titling for women	
Labour	-	Offer women farmers financing to hire farm labour
		Task agents with helping women farmers to find labour
		Provide women farmers with financing or discounts for hiring or purchasing machinery
		Provide community-based child-care centres
Non-labour inputs (seeds, fertiliser)	Provide women farmers with financing or price discounts aligned with their cash flow to encourage the purchase of fertiliser	Certify small bags of fertiliser for use by women
		Provide flexible financing for seeds Help women better identify and obtain good-quality seed
Information	Train extension agents to target female farmers and be more responsive to their agricultural information needs[59]	-
	Bring agricultural training and advice to women's doorsteps through farmer field schools and mobile phone applications	
	Identify female volunteer farm advisors to spread information within women's social networks	
Access to markets	Provide market services through information and communications technology (ICT)	Promote women's cultivation of high-value/cash crops
		Channel existing groups to access market opportunities[60]
Human capital	Raise education levels of adult female farmers	-

Source: O'Sullivan et al. (2014): 13.

Notes

[1] Draft resolution referred to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly by the General Assembly at its 64th session: Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, General Assembly, 17 September 2010).

[2] Examples are: Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), and Decent Work for Domestic Workers, 2011 (No. 189).

[3] See e.g. Elborgh-Woytek et al. (2013): 4; Johansson de Silva et al. (2014): 8; Hallward-Driemeier (2011): 2; World Bank (2013): 1. A more critical note is provided by Kabeer (2011), stating that '(attempts) to understand the relationships between women's paid work, gender equality and economic growth continue to be based on very imperfect measures of women's work. Efforts to make generalisations about the impact of women's work on economic growth have to always be qualified by a caveat about the reliability of the measure' (Kabeer (2011): 7). Another critical note can be found in Eyben and Napier-Moore (2009): 294.

[4] See e.g. Kabeer (2005): 18-19; UN Millennium Project (2005): 89; Blackden et al. (2006): 5; Deere and Doss (2006): 1; Esplen and Brody (2007): 1; Johansson de Silva et al. (2014): 8 and Nallari and Griffith (2011): 11.

[5] Along the same lines, Duflo argues that when economic development reduces poverty it can have an important positive impact on gender equality (Duflo (2012): 1053-1054, 1058).

[6] See also Buvinic et al. (2013) arguing that the disparity between genders in productivity and earning is 'primarily the result of differences in the size of businesses and farms, in the sectors where they operate, and in both educational levels and returns on this education' (Buvinic et al. (2013): 12; 27).

[7] See e.g. Blackden et al. (2006): 3-4; Kabeer and Natali (2013): 35; IFC (2013): 2; Johansson de Silva et al. (2014): 8.

[8] Kabeer gives the example of women employed in the garment industry in Bangladesh, with women reporting amongst others that their new earning power had enabled them to postpone early marriage, renegotiate their relations within marriage, to leave abusive marriages, support ageing parents (Kabeer (2005): 19). At the same time, she highlights the exploitative working conditions women are generally confronted with, such as extremely long working hours during busy seasons, often combined with lay-offs in the slack season, poor working conditions, restrictions on unionisation and health hazards (Kabeer (2005): 20). See also Solotaroff and Prabha Pande (2014), indicating that '(analyses) of the role of Bangladesh's garment industry — dominated by women workers — in empowerment and violence suggest that while such employment has changed women's lives in terms of their mobility and access to resources, it may be associated also with higher risks of violence. Working women face double risks of harassment: at work and on the street while getting to work (Siddiqi 2003). The specific conditions of work in this sector may contribute to an environment conducive to violence, such as the lack of formal contracts, which creates pressure on women to succumb to employers' sexual advances, or the necessity to work at night but without adequate oversight and other safeguards against sexual or physical harassment (Siddiqi 2003)' (Solotaroff and Prabha Pande (2014): 138-139).

[9] See further on this issue e.g. Blackden et al. (2006): 17; Esplen and Brody (2007): 2, 12; FAO (2009): 14, 24; Gallina (2010): 24; Agarwal (2011): 7-8; FAO (2011): 5, 7, 13, 27; ActionAid (2012): 2, 5, 7; Duflo (2012): 1059; GDN et al. (2015): 58-59; Kabeer and Natali (2013): 40; and Nallari and Griffith (2011): 107, 112.

[10] See also Kabeer (2011): 3, 5. Kabeer furthermore highlights that most of the women in the study locations, also 'fell outside the purview of normal trade union activity' and therefore had 'organisational bargaining power to negotiate for fairer returns to their labour, for better conditions or for greater recognition of their rights as citizens' (Kabeer (2011): 6).

[11] A similar business case is used for investing in women and girls in agricultural development in e.g. DFID (2014a): 9.

[12] See on this issue also e.g. Esplen and Brody (2007); Chant and Sweetman (2012); and World Bank (2013): 11.

[13] According to the World Bank, while economic growth is important for improving the incomes of poor people and for moving people out of poverty, this does not imply 'that economic growth necessarily improves gender equality' and 'some gender inequalities persist despite economic development' (World Bank (2014): 181, 183). Pages 182-183 of the report provide several pathways through which a 'more vibrant economy' can increase gender equality, keeping in mind that economic change affects women and men differently. Pages 202-203 observe furthermore: 'The overall evidence from different types of data and empirical analyses supports the conclusion that economic development provides an enabling environment for gender equality — though its effects are not immediate or without costs, at least in the short run'.

[14] Also according to ILO (2014) 'there is little rigorous evidence that access to finance — either as a loan or grant — leads to sustained increases in the revenues or profits of women's microenterprises. There is even less evidence that finance has any positive effect on the number of employees in women's firms. This suggests that finance alone, particularly in small amounts typically associated with microcredit, is insufficient to enable female micro-entrepreneurs to make long-term business investments or to overcome other constraints that may limit their businesses' growth potential.' (ILO (2014): 4).

[15] Not surprisingly, according to ActionAid et al. (2012) 'women smallholders and marginal farmers need support to enable them to make informed decisions before applying for credit (which in some circumstances can place farmers in unmanageable debt, resulting in loss of land or other assets put up as collateral), and in developing viable business plans' (ActionAid et al. (2012): 9).

[16] See further Stewart et al. (2010): 32-38, 48; Dickson and Bangpan (2012): 68; and ADB (2007): 7. Different and often contradictory views can also be found in e.g. Esplen and Brody (2007): 21; Banerjee et al. (2009) 14-15, 21; Banerjee et al. (2013): 13, 34; ADB (2007): iv and earlier studies like Pitt et al. (1998): 987-988 and Pitt et al. (2006): 817. A discussion on micro-credit can also be found in Todd (2012).

[17] This implies that impact was not assessed in combination with other activities (microfinance plus – which may include social activities and mobilisation, working through self-help or savings groups, training in e.g. financial literacy, i.e. activities that go beyond the savings and loans elements), or how any impact could be differentiated between microfinance input only, and microfinance plus (Taylor and Pereznieto (2014): 28, 35). A more positive assessment can be found in Cho and Honorati (2013) based on a meta-regression analysis of 37 impact evaluation studies of entrepreneurship programmes in developing countries. The authors refer to the positive effect of releasing women's credit constraints on enhancing business performance and earning opportunities (Cho and Honorati (2013): 32).

[18] The study used a broad definition of empowerment, which included, following Kabeer, aspects of access and control over resources (inputs), women's control over household spending and participation in decision-making, increased female mobility, increased spending on education, health, nutrition, with corresponding developmental effects on household well-being. ILO (2014) also found 'very little rigorous evidence on the impact of finance on women's agency in the household or over their businesses' (ILO (2014): 6). Moreover, the evidence was mixed.

[19] See e.g. Johansson de Silva et al. (2014): 8; UN Millennium Project (2005): 88. The situation was not too different in the Netherlands (Eerdewijk et al. (2009): 37-38).

[20] E.g. the gendered legal differences that still exist in many countries and the lack of legal parity between women and men create additional business costs for women (IFC quoted in Buvinic et al. (2013): 28).

[21] See e.g. Nallari and Griffith (2011): 112-113; UN (2009): 9; UN (2012): 5; UN (2014): 22; Esplen and Brody (2007): 2.

[22] According to the World Bank, excluding housework and childcare, it is 'estimated that women account for 58 percent of all unpaid contributing family work, and about one out of every four women in the labor force globally is an unpaid contributing family worker – someone who works in a market orientated business owned by a related household member but is not a partner in the business' (World Bank (2013): 21).

[23] According to the UN, '(the) higher part-time employment rates are associated with a number of factors, including gender inequality in family roles, the absence of adequate and affordable childcare and elderly-care facilities, and/or other social perceptions which play a significant role in the participation of women in employment, in their occupational choices, and in the employment patterns that reinforce gender disparities in the labour market' (UN (2014): 22). At the same time, Kabeer (2012) points at weak enforcement of existing labour legislation and the potential benefits of voluntary codes of conduct as part of international efforts to promote corporate social responsibility, especially in consumer goods industries, though the 'effectiveness of these codes in bringing about improvements in wages and working conditions has been very varied' (Kabeer (2012): 42).

[24] Kabeer and Natali (2013) recognise that such a gender gap in wages can, under certain conditions, contribute to the pace of economic growth: 'However, such strategies are most likely to work in highly patriarchal or politically repressive societies, where women can be crowded into these sectors and their bargaining power repressed. Moreover, even within these societies, such strategies are likely to only work in the early phase of export-led industrialisation when there is a relatively large surplus of female labour' (Kabeer and Natali (2013): 36). See also Blackden et al. (2006): 4-5 and World Bank (2013) referring to an ILO analysis of 83 countries showing that women in paid work earn on average between 10 and 30% less than men (World Bank (2013): 2).

[25] See e.g. Pinder (2005): 11; Elborgh-Woytek et al. (2013): 5-12; Kabeer (2005): 20; Esplen and Brody (2007): 6-7; UN Millennium Project (2005): 90, 94-95; GDN et al. (2015): 61-62. This also applies to women working in the agricultural sector (FAO (2011): 17).

[26] See e.g. GENDERNET (2012).

[27] See KST 91585 (2005): 103-104. Pinder (2005), using the same gender marker, concluded with respect to DFID that 'gender equality is being sidetracked and is receiving less attention now than it was eight years ago' but that 'concerns over data quality mean this finding should be further investigated' (Pinder (2005): 2). According to the paper of GENDERNET, 'DAC members placed comparatively less emphasis on gender equality and women's empowerment in the economic and productive sectors than they did in their support for other sectors' with the largest share committed to agriculture/rural development (GENDERNET (2011): 8).

[28] Using ILO data, DFID (2014a) demonstrates that 37% of all employed women work in agriculture (this is 33% for all employed men) but that 'the overall share of employment in agriculture declined by 5.5 percentage points, compared to women's employment in agriculture which declined by 9.5 percentage points between 1991 and 2012 in Sub-Saharan Africa' (DFID (2014a): 14).

[29] See e.g. Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 25.

[30] See FAO (2009): 7; Gallina (2010): 21; Farnworth (2010): 64; FAO et al. (2010): 22. As also observed by Oxfam, '(when) a crop becomes commercial, it changes gender and becomes a man's crop', as it is men who control its production, marketing, and, most importantly, the use of income accruing from its sale' (Oxfam (2013): 9; FAO et al. (2010): 24).

[31] See Pinder (2005): 20; Blackden et al. (2006): 6-7, 16-18; Deere and Doss (2006): 6, 7, 14-15; Quisumbing and Pandolfelli (2009) Gallina (2010): 8, 16-18, 20; Buvinic et al. (2010): 1; Agarwal (2011): 11, 12; FAO (2011): 23-40, 60; GENDERNET (2011): 18-19; Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 4, 6; ActionAid (2012): 5, 8; Croppenstedt et al. (2013): 5-10, 12, 13, 15, 19, 21, 31; World Bank (2014): 6, 7, 10; BRIDGE (2014): 16-17.

[32] With respect to e.g. extension services, a SIDA evaluation of 2010, indicates the importance of: (i) not conceptualising extension 'as a technical, value free activity'; (ii) building household rather than individual capacity – seeing the farm as a productive enterprise; (iii) gender awareness training of

extension staff and creating 'space for women' in community dialogues (Farnworth (2010): 61-62).

33 See also the overview provided in GENDERNET (2011): 18.

34 The SIDA evaluation of 2010 in this respect advocates for addressing women's practical needs such as women-friendly agricultural tools, water sources located close to homes, improved cooking stoves and the introduction of improved labour saving technologies (Farnworth (2010): 63).

35 See e.g. FAO (2009): 16; Gallina (2010): 9; FAO (2011): 23, 32; Agarwal (2011): 13; ActionAid (2012): 2, 10.

36 A new initiative in this respect is the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index that aims to measure the empowerment, agency, and inclusion of women in the agriculture sector. The index defines women's empowerment in terms of: decisions about agricultural production; access to and decision-making power over productive resources; control over use of income; leadership in the community; and time use. So far, data are publicly available on Bangladesh, Guatemala and Uganda. For a brief overview see http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/weai_brochure.pdf.

37 Croppenstedt et al. (2013): 3; World Bank (2013): 2; World Bank (2014): 9. According to Alderman et al. (2003), using data from Burkina Faso from the 1980s, '(large) gender differences in yields, however, do not imply that women are less efficient cultivators than men' Alderman et al. (2003): 63). The yield differences might reflect differences in the intensity with which inputs, such as labour and fertiliser, are applied on men's and women's plots.

38 At the same time, 'in many countries, even when women have access to the same amount of inputs as men, equal access does not achieve the same effect in terms of agricultural productivity' (World Bank (2014): 10).

39 See Agarwal (2011): 14; FAO (2011): 6, 42. Similar instrumentalist arguments are given by e.g. Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011), arguing that 'incorporating gender issues more widely and systematically in agricultural research, development, and extension systems will contribute significantly to meeting the food needs of the future population or ensuring that productivity translates into the improved welfare of the poor' (Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 1). Increasing women's control over resources would moreover have 'positive effects on a number of important development outcomes, including food security, child nutrition, and education' (Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 4).

40 'A value chain refers to an entire system of production, processing and marketing from inception to the finished product. It consists of a series of chain actors, linked together by flows of products, finance, information and services. At each stage of the chain, the value of the product goes up because the product becomes more available or attractive to the consumer – hence the term 'value' chain. Costs also accumulate at each stage of the chain' (KIT et al. (2012): 5). A value chain can be a vertical linking or a network between various independent business organisations and can involve processing, packaging, storage, transport and distribution. Modern value chains are characterised by vertical coordination, consolidation of the supply base, agro-industrial processing and use of standards throughout the chain (FAO et al. (2010c)).

41 See e.g. Gallina (2010), Riisgaard et al. (2010), FAO (2011), FAO et al. (2010), and IOB (2011h).

42 Martens and Swinnen (2009): 14; Chan (2010); FAO (2011): 13.

43 A WIEGO review of 49 value chain-related studies and resources shows e.g. that women, across different crops and countries: (i) constitute a substantial proportion, and often the majority, of the workforce in packhouses and processing units; (ii) tend to be employed in harvesting, peeling/slicing of fruit, sorting, grading and packing, while men were employed in operating machinery, loading and unloading of boxes/crates and other heavy work, and typically under-represented in better-paid and more secure jobs in all of the focus sectors (Chan (2013): 10). At the same time, 'the literature also indicated that the extent to which horizontal job segregation by gender translated into gender inequality in pay and conditions depended on the country, crop and level in the chain, demonstrating that horizontal segregation does not always lead to women being worse off than men' (Chan (2013): 10). FAO et al. (2010c) refer to 'gender stereotypes that keep poor and uneducated women in lower paid,

less skilled and more insecure work in the value chain' with gender-biased segregation often used to legitimise the payment of lower wages to women though with exceptions for some non-traditional agricultural exports. See also Staritz and Reis (2013): 7.

44 Looking at horticulture in South Africa, Kenya and Zambia, Barrientos et al. (2003) refer to 'Female employment is characterized by highly gendered and informal employment relations. In all three countries, women form the core of the temporary, seasonal and casual work force, while men tend to be concentrated in the fewer permanent jobs. Women tend to be crowded into a narrow range of seasonal occupations characterized by long hours and few opportunities for meeting domestic responsibilities (due to insufficient childcare, social provision and maternity leave). Informal female employment is accompanied by job insecurity, risk and lack of employment or social protection, often with the poorest conditions of employment amongst horticultural workers' (Barrientos et al. (2003): 1514). See also KIT et al. (2012), which refers to 'an increased workload coming with women participating in agricultural value chains, which can come at the cost of other income-generating activities' (KIT et al. (2012): 3).

45 According to the same authors, gender-intensified constraints persist that limit chances of women participating in value chains, including limited access to economic inputs, networks, education, skills development and training, and their responsibility for unpaid household duties, which, in many countries, cover both the immediate and the extended family (Staritz and Reis (2013): 7, 24).

46 On instrumental arguments, KIT et al. (2012) refer to 'serving women is good for business and the economy', 'women present new market opportunities as buyers, suppliers, and consumers', 'profiling gender sensitivity can bolster a company's reputation' and 'when women are in management positions, profits go up' (KIT et al. (2012): 25; see also World Bank (2013): 6). At the same time they argue that the arguments are 'interconnected and overlapping' and together 'form a solid rationale for addressing gender equity in value chains' (KIT et al. (2012): 26).

47 On the differential impact of trade policies on men and women see e.g. Randriamaro (2006) and Aguayo-Tellez (2011). According to Aguayo-Tellez (2011), the 'empirical literature predominantly indicates that trade liberalization policy and foreign direct investment reduced gender inequality in developing countries, bringing female complementary technologies, improving labour rights and reducing discrimination' (Aguayo-Tellez (2011): 23). Key in this respect are women's educational opportunities and skill endowment since '(in) the long run, women's relative improvements, in every way, will depend on their improvements on skills to better compete on the newly skill-biased competitive world' (Aguayo-Tellez (2011): 24).

48 A job voucher is a non-transferable voucher that can be used to pay for educational retraining or skill enhancement in order to prepare for future employment.

49 Similar findings are reported in Buvinic et al. (2013) and ILO (2014) though the latter source warns at the same time that there is 'very little rigorous evidence on how and what types of programs are effective in improving the business performance and growth of women-owned SMEs' (ILO (2014): 11). What is more, out of the 28 studies used, eight measured the effects on women's agency, with four finding no effect, two finding mixed effects and two finding negative effects (ILO (2014): 6). For young women's employment reference is furthermore made to: (i) skills training, job search assistance, internships, and wage subsidies increase young women's employability and earnings if social restrictions are not binding; and (ii) quality youth training programmes that include 'soft skills' (i.e. personality traits, motivations and preferences that are valued in the labour market) plus technical skills, classroom training, job internships and stipends for child support, 'especially in low-income socially conservative setting' (Buvinic et al. (2013): 6).

50 Mobile money refers to the use of a mobile phone to pay for a wide range of services and digital or hard goods. It replaces paying with cash, cheque, or credit card.

51 The problem is however that women often ask for small amounts of credit, financial institutions often do not find such small loans profitable enough or find such loans too risky (see e.g. Kantor (2001): 6, 7).

[52] ILO (2014) questions the cost-effectiveness of interventions combining supervision and advice with cash grants for very poor micro-entrepreneurs (ILO (2014): 11).

[53] ILO (2014) in this respect advocates for training with medium to high intensity, simpler training tailored to low-skilled entrepreneurs and focused on the practical application of skills to women's business (ILO (2014): 7).

[54] A recent ODI review suggests in this respect that '(if) family planning, health, and education services are not made available, the impact of an intervention on women's economic empowerment is unlikely to be maximised. This implies that an integrated approach to programming may be very important' (Taylor and Pereznieto (2014): 38). See also IDRC (2013) and Kabeer and Natali (2013): 39. Johansson de Silva et al. (2014) talk in this respect about measures designed to: (i) ease women's time constraints by providing child care and improving infrastructure; (ii) improve women's endowments by enhancing their access to productive resources — especially to land and to credit — and skills development, predominantly through training; and (iii) tackle information problems and institutional biases that work against women' (Johansson de Silva et al. (2014): 8-9). IFC (2013) moreover argues that this may result in savings from reduced staff absenteeism and turnover (IFC (2013): 2, 16).

[55] Based on Buvinic et al. (2013); Buvinic and Furst-Nichols (2014).

[56] Quisumbing and Pandolfelli observe that '(future) interventions need to consider interactions among inputs rather than treat each input in isolation, adapt interventions to clients' needs, and pay attention to the design of alternative delivery mechanisms, the trade-offs between practical and strategic gender needs, and the culture and context-specificity of gender roles' but that are 'no one-size-fits-all strategies for addressing the needs of poor rural women' (Quisumbing and Pandolfelli (2009): vi, 22). See also Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 14-15 who also stress that it may be needed to strengthen women's access to a range of resources rather than treating each input in isolation (Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 15).

[57] Along the same lines, Quisumbing and Pandolfelli recommend to '(increase) tenure security through low-cost, rapid, and transparent community land registration' (Quisumbing and Pandolfelli (2009).

[58] See also FAO (2011): 46-48.

[59] In this respect the literature indicates that there is consistent evidence of a gender bias in access to extension services and adoption of new technologies. Issues in this respect include: (i) cultural perceptions that women do not farm; (ii) perceptions that if extension services are provided to a member of a family (usually the man), they will trickle down to the household, including female members; (iii) most extension services have traditionally been devoted to farmers who own land and are willing and able to obtain credit and invest in inputs and technological innovations (See e.g. Meinzen-Dick et al. (2011): 81-82).

[60] On this issue see also Agarwal (2011): 16; Kumar and Quisumbing (2010): 2, 45.

5

Women's right to land

It is clear that land redistribution has been one of the most politically controversial and resisted of redistributive reforms (Eyben et al. (2008): 11).

5.1 Introduction

According to Duflo (2012), there is a strong correlation between economic development and women's legal rights, in areas as diverse as property rights, access to land, access to bank loans, violence against women, abortion policy, etc. (Duflo (2012): 1059). OECD/DAC underlined in 2010 that '(ownership) rights are critical to securing a sustainable livelihood and income, and the lack of these rights is one of the main sources of women's economic insecurity' and that '(discriminatory) attitudes and practices regarding the role of women in society, such as the low status of female-headed households or the limited inheritance rights accorded to women, are significant barriers to their control over resources' (OECD/DAC (2010): 2). To address these issues, already back in 1979, Article 14 (g) of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recognised women's right '(to) have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes'.[1] The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) likewise reflects the UN Member States' determination to ensure 'women's equal access to economic resources, including land, credit, science and technology vocational training, information, communication and markets, as a means to further the advancement and empowerment of women and girls'.[2]

The following paragraphs focus on women's access to land, one of the priorities of Dutch development policies. They first of all provide a brief on the main issues with respect to women's right to land, with particular attention to the relationship between customary and statutory land rights systems. More detailed information is provided on women's land rights issues in three countries in which the Netherlands has been supporting land rights programmes: Burundi, Mozambique and Rwanda. The chapter includes an attempt to draw up a theory of change with respect to women's land rights and concludes with information on what is known of promising interventions in this area.

5.2 Women and land rights – the issues

5.2.1 General

In many developing countries, small-scale food production and the women involved in this process are the backbone of rural livelihoods. Women farmers produce more than half of all the food grown in the world and 60 to 80 percent of the food grown in most developing countries. For them, as well as the urban poor, land remains a critical asset as it provides them a basic means for subsistence and market production. Land rights, as written and legally enforceable and socially recognisable instruments, are important formal institutions that 'determine the fundamental elements of land governance, namely the rights to access, withdrawal, management, exclusion, and alienation' (Namubiru-Mwaura (2014): 8).

Nevertheless, gender disparities in land access remain high and '(in) almost all countries, the gender gap in land rights has been widening rather than narrowing' (Dorn (2006): 2). According to a joint study of FAO, IFAD and ILO of 2010, in all countries for which data are available, women are less likely to own land than men. The general notion is that 'large

gender inequities exist in the ownership and control of an asset of primary importance, both globally and in Africa' (Doss et al. (2013): 1). When women do own land, the size of their plots is smaller, the quality is poorer and plots are often divided over several locations. Women's access to land is moreover undermined by pressure on the land caused by the growing market for land, increased competition as a result of population growth, rural-urban migration, etc.[3] Text box 5.1 provides more details on the land rights issues in Burundi and Rwanda.

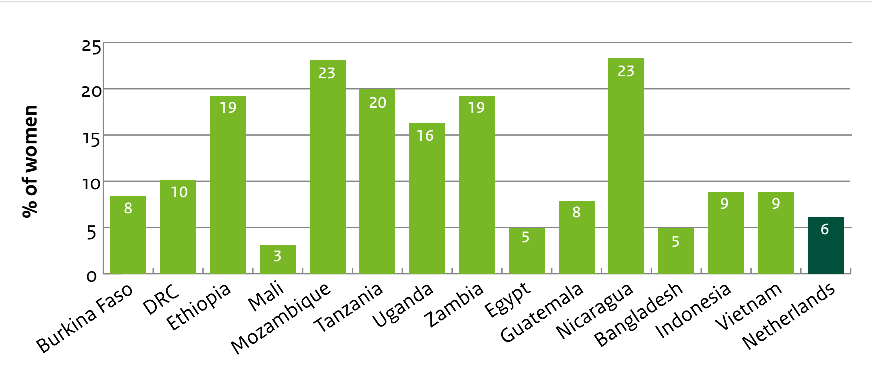
Text box 5.1 *Land issues in Burundi and Rwanda*

Land conflicts between neighbours and within families over property, boundaries and transactions are widespread and can be violent in densely populated **Burundi** (315 persons per square kilometre). Land issues are involved in more than half of all court cases, often between family members, and are among the most important factors for all crimes. Violence around land issues has regularly produced large flows of refugees and IDPs. Their return and resettlement add to the complexity of land in Burundi.

Also **Rwanda**, one of Africa's most densely populated countries with 416 persons per square kilometre, is confronted with serious land tenure and land scarcity issues. As a result, the country is facing declining agricultural productivity and increasing food insecurity. Land is likely to remain to be one of the most sensitive issues in Rwandan society (IS Academy (2012) *Rwanda*). A population growth of 2.8% per year and the traditional custom to divide land among the members of a new generation has contributed to increased land fragmentation. Moreover, in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide there was a lack of clarity over legal status and rights to land, with landowners returning to Rwanda to find their land occupied by others.

Data from the FAO Gender and Land Rights Database confirm the low share of women owning land in a series of (former) Dutch aid partner countries for which data is available – and the Netherlands itself (see figure 5.1).[4]

Figure 5.1 *Share of women owning land in (former) Dutch partner countries*



Source: FAO Gender and Land Rights Database.[5]

There are three general mechanisms for women and men to obtain rights to land: (i) through social and kinship relations at the local level, (ii) on the land market, and (iii) from the state. These mechanisms are embedded in various (interacting) institutions that create, modify, and influence land tenure systems. The literature shows that gender inequality in land ownership is related to a male bias or preference in these institutions, including customary inheritance and marriage laws, community and state programmes of land distribution as well as in the land market, with women less likely than men to be successful buyers.[6]

5.2.2 Formal and customary land tenure

Nowadays, in many countries there is constitutional protection of women's rights. In many cases, though not in all, this was followed by the more recent introduction or reform of land related statutory laws (or state laws) that have given women equal rights to men. However, even where gender-friendly land legislation laws are in place, they are often not applied in practice and many rural women still do not own, control or inherit land (Namubiru-Mwaura (2014): iii).

An important factor is in this respect that customary laws – that may conflict with and are stronger than formal laws in governing women's right to land, especially in rural areas[7] – continue to exist in parallel with statutory (see text box 5.2 on the state of affairs in Burundi, Mozambique and Rwanda). As a consequence, 'changes to state laws have limited impact on their land access' (PLAAS (2011): 3).[8] To add to this complexity, customary laws are difficult to translate and may not be written down. What results is 'a complex and opaque system in which the rules determining the ownership, control and disposition of productive assets within households vary with location, ethnicity, and religion within the same country' (Fafchamps and Quisumbing (2003): 160). At the same time, customary regulations and traditions do not always discriminate against women. Some of them were meant to protect women. An example is the *igiseke* in Burundi, which is meant to provide daughters who get married a small plot of land (usufruct rights) to show that they are part of the family and to provide them with a safety net in times of problems (e.g. when they cannot access land anymore through their husband). Problems start when these customs are no longer applied.

Text box 5.2 *Statutory and customary land rights in Burundi, Mozambique and Rwanda*

Formal access to land in **Burundi** is regulated by the Land Code of 2011, which replaced the Land Code of 1986 and is the result of a process dating back to 2000 with the Arusha Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation. This *Code Foncier* introduced land certificates, decentralised land administration and a revocation of the governors' authority to allocate state land. It recognises the legitimacy of land rights acquired and held under customary law, provided that all asserted rights are registered – unregistered customary rights do not have the protection of the formal law. Under customary law, land is usually held either individually and by households and land transactions and succession are regulated at family level. The new land policy enables the implementation of a decentralised system of land registration that results into the delivery of land certificates. Most of the land certificates are registered in man's name. Parallel to the official system (equal rights to land) there is a customary practice which is patrilineal and limiting the rights to land for women. Women have no rights on the land of their husband or on the family land. Women can have a *usufruct* right on the land of their father. However, the rights of women on the family land (*igiseke*[9]) that exist under customary practice are not taken into account in the new land certification system. This right is not included in the certificates on the family land and as such weakens the claims of women for this right. The *usufruct* right is only described in the report of the recognition process but does not appear on the official land certificate, which will also be a legal piece of evidence.

Mozambique's new Land Law of 1997 was designed to regulate and control the on-going process of land-grabbing, secure the rights of the Mozambican people over land and other natural resources, and promote investments and the sustainable and equitable use of these resources. Key principles of this law include[10]: (i) state ownership of the land; (ii) recognition of customary rights and the customary system of land adjudication; and (iii) recognition of local communities as right-holding entities.

In **Rwanda**, after the introduction of a new Constitution in 2003, the land reform process started with the National Land Policy in 2004, followed by the Organic Land Law of 2005. The Land Law recognises land claims obtained under customary law, and converts them to lease rights and demands that they be registered, thereby incorporating these claims into the formal system. In practice, though, the reach of formal law, especially where land dispute resolution is concerned, remains limited.

In many countries, customary laws do not recognise women's rights in areas related to marriage and divorce and inheritance[11] but follow patriarchal traditions and practices (also see the case of Burundi in text box 5.2) – and the values and norms that come with them. These patriarchal traditions and practices often discriminate against women and are biased against women owning land.[12] They dictate in this case that men are the owners of the land,

and the rights of women, as 'secondary community members, are generally derived from a male relative – be it father, husband, brother, or brother-in-law' (World Bank et al. (2008): 4). Community norms and customary arrangements may furthermore restrict women and favour men in access to community land.

Since women's rights are often insufficiently protected in traditional systems, they come under threat as land values increase, or when the land is in danger of being appropriated by the better-off or the well-informed.[13] Polygamy, though illegal in most countries, also impacts on women's rural land holdings and use rights, with polygamous partners having a weaker position in comparison to those in monogamous marriages. Text box 5.3 provides further information on the women and land rights in Burundi, Mozambique and Rwanda.

Text box 5.3 *Women and land rights in Burundi, Mozambique and Rwanda*[14]

Customary law in **Burundi** excludes daughters from inheritance, with the exception of the *igiseke* system referred to above. Under formal law wives and daughters are not granted inheritance rights to land either; however the same applies for sons. Although widows are granted lifetime use-right of land owned by former spouses, this custom is fading due to land scarcity and pressure for land among an ever-increasing population. The high level of competition over land makes the issues of women's land rights very sensitive within families, and potential source of conflict and even violence. Displacement due to Burundi's conflict and post-conflict situation has worsened the situation for women further. Efforts to reform the inheritance and marital property regime have not led to any substantial results yet (IS Academy (2012) *Burundi*).

In **Mozambique**, the 2004 Constitution and the 2004 Family Law assert the equality of men and women and prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. The Family Law also provides that both women and men have rights to administer marital property and have equal rights to devolve and inherit property. Also according to the country's Land Law of 1997 women and men have equal rights to hold land and that woman have the right to participate in all land-related decisions and to register for a DUAT.[15] In addition, women can request the title over the same land with registration in the National Land Cadastre. However, gender inequities with regard to land tenure persist under customary laws and practices, which often do not recognise women as title bearers. Under customary law, women usually cannot inherit land and in court cases men are often favoured over women for inheritance and management of marital property. Widows that were married under the 'community of property' regime are officially entitled to inherit half of the property which was acquired during their marriage, but in practice few women exercise this right, partly due to a lack of information.

In **Rwanda**, the Land Law of 2005 prohibits any discrimination based on sex or origin in matters relating to ownership of rights over land and protects the rights of other family members in the case of a land transfer. In Rwanda too, women are caught between traditional practices and the new land policy. Customary law continues to have a strong influence on how marriage and inheritance are regulated in rural areas and determines that land rights follow the patrilineal line. Rwandese women can acquire land through marriage but this does not entail the right to control the land by means of selling, gifting, renting or building. Moreover, women cannot inherit their husband's or father's land under customary law and the rights gained – most often user rights – are normally secondary to those of father or husband. The Matrimonial Regimes, Liberties and Succession Law (1999), opposed this practice by granting daughters the right to inherit land from parents and widows to inherit their deceased husband's property. However, in practice the scope of this law is limited, as it only concerns formally married wives and widows, whilst women who were married under customary law or religious union (a common practice in rural areas) are excluded. The adoption of formal laws guaranteeing women's access to marital and natal family land has not led to significant changes on the ground (IS Academy (2012) *Rwanda*). What is more, Rwandese men find it difficult to accept the new rights of women under the inheritance law, causing an increase of gender-based violence (EKN Kigali (2011)).[16]

The perseverance of customary practices plus the existence of many different state and non-state institutions, with competing laws and regulations related to land make it 'difficult for women to enforce their legal claim to land rights and to benefit from the protection accorded them by law' (PLAAS (2011): 3). Women are thus 'caught between differing sets of laws and are under pressure to conform to traditional practices' which may force women to abandon their property, even when they have marriage certificates and hold joint title to the land (Brown and Gallant (2014): 6). A complicating factor is that in the face of increasing poverty, commercialisation of agriculture (which 'generally has a negative effect on women's traditional rights to access land'), and increased land scarcity 'many customary tenure systems are no longer capable of ensuring that households and women have access to sufficient land and other resources' (World Bank et al. (2008): 13, 14).[131] According to Joireman, '(as) land gains in relative value, and the incentives for titling increase due to changing economic opportunities or population growth, multiple legal systems can create confusion in the allocation of property rights and conflict' (Joireman (2008): 1237, 1240).

On the other hand, the existing cultural structures still play an important role for women when making efforts to settle land related conflicts.[18] Going through customary institutions has advantages in being more easily accessible and being 'speedier forums for rural women' (World Bank et al. (2008): 25). This is also where the so-called community paralegals may come in as they 'are being incorporated into or serving as advisors to customary systems, such as local councils or tribunals, and providing information so that women's rights will be upheld in the process' (Brown and Gallant (2014): 29). IDRC research moreover indicates

'that women's access to land does not simply hinge on a choice between customary and statutory systems', that the 'official relation between customary and statutory law differs from country to country' and that 'we are faced with a more complex question of how the two systems interact and are used by different groups of women and men' (Budiender and Alma (2011): 29, 70).[19]

The importance of these customary structures is reinforced by the following observations. First of all, government institutions for land reform in many may have a suitable law to implement but lack the means – and at times the political will – to systematically enforce it, 'particularly in areas far from the center of power' (Joireman (2008): 1235). Secondly, obstacles to applying land legislation are manifold and context-specific. Examples include:

- conflictive legislation that, though 'gender neutral'[20], tends to ignore the many constraints women face in obtaining land rights. These challenges, associated with social norms and culture 'cannot be solved by legal reform alone' (World Bank (2014): 139);
- institutional weakness (with e.g. a weak presence beyond major urban areas, often weak institutional structures and capacities). As observed by Van Gelder, '(the) weaker a state in enforcing its laws and the lower its legitimacy, the lower will be the importance and effectiveness of property rights as states may not be able to effectively keep a property rights system afloat' (Van Gelder (2010));
- the pervasive influence of gender bias, with male-dominated institutions for land administration still discriminating against women, either explicitly or implicitly[21]; and
- the inaccessibility of formal institutions for poor women due to high cost, high illiteracy rates, the need for legal documents, the language used, lack of legal knowledge, distance and lack plus costs of transport and the length and the complexity of the registration process (see text box 5.4).[22]

In addition there is 'community pressure or threats against women who chose to go against community norms and access judicial systems' and 'women incur significant social costs for going against cultural norms; these costs include social ridicule and the possible loss of social benefits'.[23]

Text box 5.4 *Issues in land law implementation in Burundi, Mozambique and Rwanda*

In **Burundi**, registration of land rights has hardly taken place due to a complex and costly registration process. Implementation of **Mozambique**'s Land Law of 1997 has been slow and weak, mainly due to poor knowledge and understanding of the law and its implications by local communities and farmers and limited capacity of land administration bodies. As a result, most communities have not delimited their land or registered their rights, with government and investors failing to recognise the extent of community land, sometimes leading to land grabbing or 'distress sales'. **Rwanda** is confronted with the issue of how to deal with polygamy – which is illegal but still frequently practiced.[24]

5.3 Arguing the importance of women's land rights – a theory of change

For both rural and urban people alike, secure and long-term property rights are essential. As the literature states, 'it is now increasingly recognized that, as a consequence, land and the institutions governing its ownership and use are of great importance for broader economic growth and poverty reduction from a much broader range of perspectives' (Augustinus and Deininger (2005): 2). Looking more specifically at the issue of women's land rights, the literature[25] argues the importance of women's access to secure land tenure rights in the following terms:

- 'Women's land rights and gender justice in land governance are fundamental pillars in the promotion and protection of women's human rights in rural areas'– they are 'human rights themselves' – and the question of women's right to land is 'one of citizenship' (Daley et al. (2013): 4, 7).
- Positive effects of land titling programmes on perceived tenure security of women and outcomes regarding productivity-enhancing land investment (in soil and water conservation (improved drainage and irrigation, planting of perennial crops, terracing and tree planting) and increased agricultural productivity. The argument is that with increased security of land tenure, land-right holders are more likely to make long-term investments in their land if they are confident that the state cannot expropriate their holdings . At the same time, while land registration may increase legal tenure security it does not automatically lead to a woman's *perception* of her land tenure as being secure.[26]
- Positive effects of land titling programmes on women's participation in rental market – provided that that land rights are transferable. The proceeds can then be used to finance household expenditures and investments in the land. Women with land tenure security are less likely to become economically vulnerable when they grow old, lose their spouse, divorce or separate from a spouse in case of migration by men.[27]
- Potentially perceived tenure security may result in increased income and a better bargaining position of women in their household (including increased control of household productive resources) and in the community as well as vis-à-vis Government, e.g. to demand their share in government-established infrastructure and services (Agarwal (2003)). It may also be a critical element in diversified livelihood systems, e.g. having a positive effect on women's employment outside the home, self-employment, and earnings. Interestingly, according to DFID, 'evidence on whether strengthening women's property rights results in greater agricultural productivity is limited and contested' though women's ownership of land and housing does offer 'poor women security against poverty that other forms of income do not' (DFID (2014b): 49, 55).
- Potentially perceived tenure security also improves women's potential access to credit since land is a particularly important asset for getting bank loans that require collateral. At the same time, the literature shows that: (i) poor households in general and poor women in particular may be hesitant in offering their land as collateral; and (ii) that the positive effects of land rights on access to credit mostly concern richer households, urban areas, and larger-scale farms (Rodgers and Menon (2012): 11, 17). According to the World

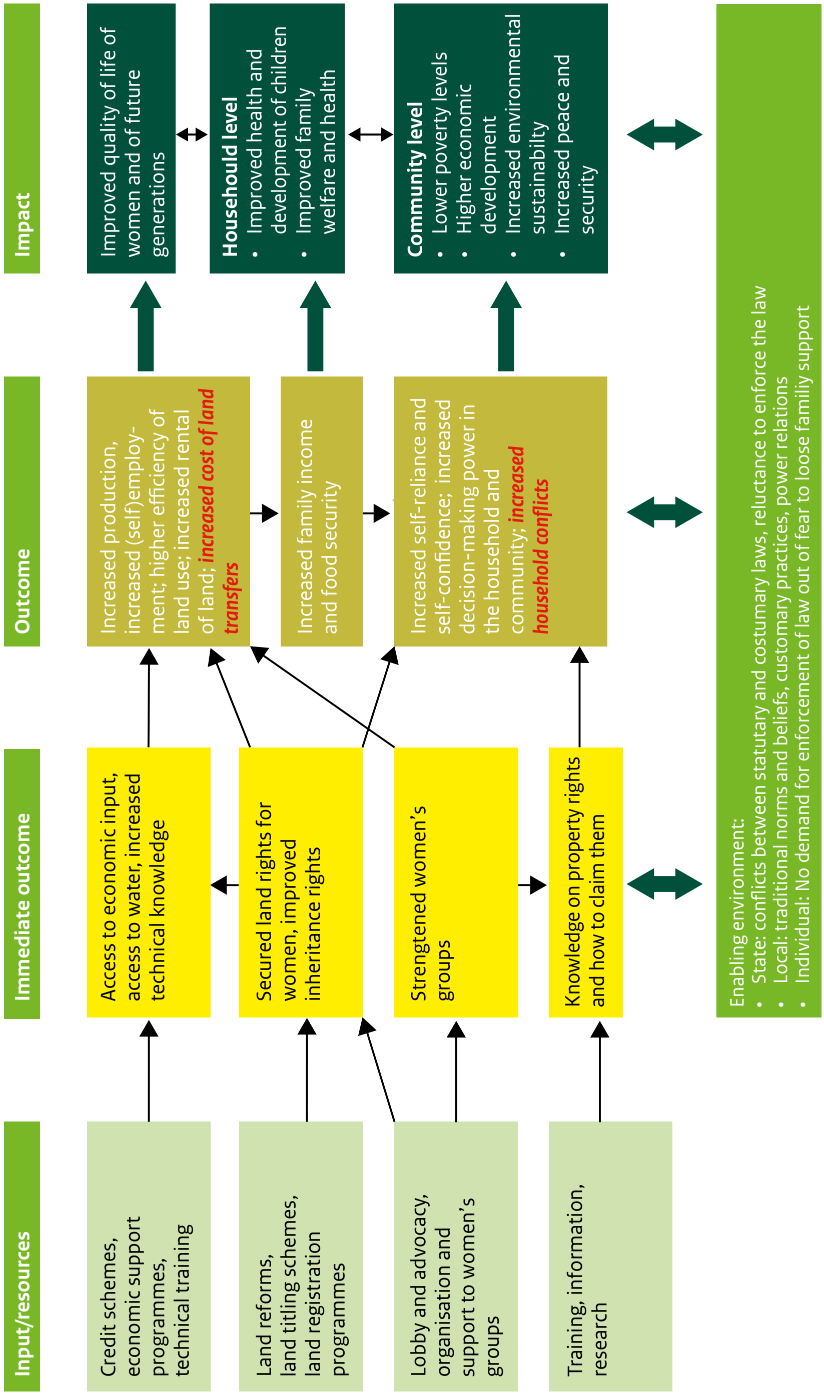
Bank, however, even with a title to land, smallholders and low-income households continue to find access to commercial credit elusive' and there is no reason to believe that for women this will be different (World Bank et al. (2008): 31). Moreover, the ability to successfully use land as collateral depends on reliable information on property rights and transparency in the regulatory structure.[28]

- Perceived land tenure security may also have less tangible effects such as an increased knowledge of the outside world contributing to increased self-confidence. Women with property rights are more likely to be active members of their communities and community institutions (DFID (2014b): 67). It may also provide a safe haven/outside option that may protect women against domestic violence and abandonment and/or increase her mobility and decision making power.[29] Other sources in this respect indicate that granting property or inheritance rights to women and girls may have potential backlash effects on increased tension within the household, justifications for wife beating and suicide rates, including negative social effects on women's access to land (Lawry et al. (2014)).
- Finally, according to several sources[30], secure land rights also lead to increased allocation of household resources to women and children (and their education and nutrition[31]) as well as increased household welfare.

However, giving equal access to land is not enough. There is also a need for changing cultural norms, e.g. those that prohibit women to plough the land they own, and for increased access to and control over other resources such as water, labour, credit, agricultural inputs, information and knowledge.[32] Secondly, it is important to realise that not all women benefit equally, benefits or effects may depend on their marital status, the type of household they reside in and their position in this household and the community, the division of labour in agriculture, women's literacy levels, the geographical or political economic context they live in, etc.

Finally, land rights programmes should be very context-specific; there is not one fixed answer.[33] Good knowledge of the context, customary tenure systems, which are not standard, and of existing barriers is a prerequisite for 'gender and land rights' interventions to make the right choices and to have an impact.[34] Such heterogeneity makes it difficult to reconstruct a generic theory of change on the issue of land rights. Moreover, 'insufficient information is available to properly assess the long-term impacts of land titling and challenges of implementation or to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of these programs' (Namubiru-Mwaura (2014): 18).[35] An attempt to do so is provided in figure 5.2 which is based on the literature and the experiences within land right programmes supported by the Netherlands.

Figure 5.2 *Results chain for women and land rights*



5.4 What works?

Against this background of heterogeneity and obvious lack of impact evaluation, it is difficult to answer the question: what works? Given the variety in existing land tenure systems, coming up with an answer that is applicable to all contexts is impossible. At the same time, this variety underlines 'the importance of understanding local contexts and the realities on the ground, including customs and traditions and the way statutory right play out' for designing effective land reform policies and interventions (World Bank (2014): 139).

Some key elements identified in the literature, realising that women are not helpless victims but have a role, either individually or collectively, to secure their land tenure, include the following:[36]

Joint titling and registration in the name of the husband and wife, with potential benefits for guarding against arbitrary action by one spouse, protecting against the dispossession of women through abandonment, separation, or divorce.[37] According to Eyben et al. (2008), women are more likely to benefit from the provision of joint entitlements when it is made mandatory rather than optional (Eyben et al. (2008): 11).[38] Domingo et al. (2015) are more reserved in this respect: 'Empowerment potential is greater where women can access land directly, rather than through a male family member, but whether benefits are greater for those with individual or joint land title or access through customary rights depends on context' (Domingo et al. (2015): 61). Reality may be more complex though[39]:

- Women may not insist on having their names included on the title to household land because of potential conflicts with husbands or their family;
- Women may not claim their rights because they prefer to have long-term social support from brothers and other family members;
- Having their names on the land titles does not necessarily come with any decision-making powers concerning the land;
- Land may not be an asset that provides long-term economic security. On this point, one issue is whether to recognise consensual unions if the legislation mentions only legal marriage and does not explicitly recognise them.

Collective action and organisation and support of women's groups can 'increase women's land tenure security by enforcing existing legislation and gender-responsive policies from the community level' (Paradza (2011): 4).[40] This is linked to the 'watchdog function' that e.g. NGOs can play when identifying and highlighting land-related problems in a community.

Community sensitisation and training sessions on customary and statutory legal systems[41] which is about providing access to information and creating what is referred to as 'social capital'. It is also about creating legal awareness among women as well as at the level of the community as a basis for asserting their rights and secure land rights. This needs to be 'part of a larger effort to provide education, training, and other means of raising awareness of women's lack of land rights and the consequent impact on the larger economy, well-being of the family, and position and viability of women's livelihoods' (World Bank et al. (2008): 19). Results of a

study on land rights in Peru furthermore indicate that women's education level matters, finding 'support for the hypothesis that women's education level is an important contributor to women's capacity to claim their rights' (Orge Fuentes and Wiig (2009): 48).

Accessible legal information – through broader awareness raising – is important together with legal advice, through e.g. *community paralegals* that can provide advice, and access to resources for grassroots women (World Bank et al. (2008): 27).[42] Such informal paralegals may be trusted women or women leaders who have experienced land disputes themselves.

Local-to-local dialogues with headmen, clan heads, chiefs, and local councillors 'to re-assess traditional practices and adapt customary law so that it reflects current realities and communities are strengthened by women's increased access to land rights' (Brown and Gallant (2014): 29) and the development of partnerships with key stakeholders. Such community-level consultative processes may also have a role before land deals are agreed upon (Oxfam (2013): 13). As argued by Paradza, '(the) dynamics of women's land access are complex, which means that there is room for diverse actors to exert influence from a variety of standpoints in the governance structures' (Paradza (2011): 4).[43]

Notes

1 Articles 14-16 of CEDAW deal with rural women, ownership of land, inheritance rights and right to access property. CEDAW moreover emphasises that legislation is important (*de jure*) but that state parties to the Convention also need to pursue '*de facto*' equality (articles 2-5).

2 The issue is further elaborated under various strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action.

3 On the issue of gender and large-scale land acquisitions see e.g. Tanner (2013): 14-17 and Behrman et al. (2011). Tanner (2013) underlines, amongst others, the need for more empirical evidence on the differential effect of large-scale land deals on women and men. The appendix of Behrman et al. (2011) provides amongst others recommendations for gender-equitable large-scale land deals (Behrman et al. (2011): 26-27).

4 The Database was consulted on 23 March 2015. Country data are for different years. According to the explanatory notes on the database, '(the) landowner is the legal owner of the land. However, definitions of ownership may vary across countries and surveys. The indicator illustrates the proportion of women owning land, out of the total landowners in a country and as such reveals women's share in ownership. However, it does not show how widespread landownership is in the total population of a country' (http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/data-map/statistics/en/?sta_id=1162). The data on shares of women owning land should however not be seen as the sole indicator of their tenure insecurity, especially since 'data on property ownership are usually recorded at the household level in both censuses and household surveys, making it difficult to breakdown ownership by sex' (Namubiry-Mwaura (2014): 7).

5 As Doss et al. (2013) argue, the data in the database need to be interpreted with caution: (i) 'much of the data available on land-related statistics is dated'; and (ii) 'the agricultural censuses provide measures of management rather than of ownership' and since a holder is not the same as an owner, 'this database is not appropriate for making generalizations about the extent of women's landownership, which are often made by advocacy and policy organizations' (Doss et al. (2013): 16). The authors call for a clear conceptualisation and contextualisation of what is meant by the term 'ownership' and for a definition of the indicators that are used to measure such ownership. 'Yet, across countries, the pattern that women own less land than men, regardless of how ownership is conceptualized, is remarkably consistent. Further, in many cases, the gender gaps are quite large' (Doss et al. (2013): 29).

6 See e.g. Deere and Leon (2002); Agarwal (2003); World Bank and TrustLaw Connect (2013); Rodgers and Menon (2012).

7 See Rodgers and Menon (2012): 14; Namubiru-Mwaura, E. (2014): 10.

8 Though legal pluralism exacerbates knowledge uncertainty and 'can be disadvantageous for some groups, such as poor and uneducated women, for whom formal state institutions are distant, expensive, and conceptually foreign' it also 'enables individuals to use more than one type of law, customary or statutory, to rationalize and legitimize their decisions or their behavior' (World Bank et al. (2008): 26).

9 Daughters can only claim their '*igiseke*' in the form of an agricultural plot of land after the death of the last remaining parent and when the mourning period is over, at the request of one or more of the usufructuaries; if they do not make the request, it means they do not need it and that they have enough land through their new family. But in this case, the brothers have a duty to send them the agricultural produce, just as what was being done when their parents were still alive. The portion of land that can be considered to be igiseke land that is not being claimed by any of the daughters will be farmed by the brothers, who must cede it to their sisters if the need arises (Diarra (2010)).

10 Other principles are a participatory methodology for land delimitation and the existence of just one type of land use right.

[11] On the differences between patrilineal, matrilineal, bilateral and Muslim inheritance practices, different marriage practices in customary societies see e.g. World Bank et al. (2008): 4-6.

[12] Because of the resulting 'complex overlapping web of rules, regulations and practices that can severely disadvantage women's opportunities' there is a need that these plural legal systems are addressed as a whole' (World Bank and TrustLaw Connect (2013): 5).

[13] The importance of customary law in determining women's rights to land has 'contributed to gender inequities in the face of cross-border, large-scale land transactions or global 'land grabs' (Rodgers and Menon (2012): 11). According to the same source the 'lack of a formal land title greatly increases the risk of land loss in the face of land commodification' (Brown and Gallant (2014): 21). It is worth noting in this respect that according to Daley there is a 'notable lack of specific information about – or indeed attention to – gender issues within the wider literature' on commercial pressures on land. The author refers to the current situation as one of 'overwhelming gender blindness' with most of the literature on this topic barely mentioning gender issues (Daley (2011): 9, 14).

[14] While in relation to these three countries, widows are specifically mentioned as a group experiencing problems in relation to land rights, divorces or separated women experience similar issues and constitute a growing group of vulnerable people.

[15] The Land Law of Mozambique provides for the Right to Use and to Benefit of Land – a Direito de Uso e Aproveitamento da Terra (DUAT). According to the Law, such a DUAT can be acquired from the State by individual men and women, by communities, and by companies.

[16] Also see Dekker (2013) on the so-called backlash effect: 'papers in this field have also stressed the potential backlash effects that may result from granting property or inheritance rights to women and girls, with reference to (justification) of wife beating and suicide rates' (Dekker (2013): 7, 26).

[17] According to Crowley (2001) moreover, customary systems 'operate most effectively when land is relatively abundant and most land users know one another and have regular and direct contact'.

[18] According to the study of Brown and Gallant (2014), 46% used grassroots mechanisms and 44% used village chiefs and only 9% went through the formal legal system (Brown and Gallant (2014): 22).

[19] Crowley (2001) also observes that 'the codification of customary rights has often strengthened and concentrated land rights of individual, senior, male household heads over multiple other interests, resulting in only a small percentage of the population, and strikingly few women, holding land certificates or titles in developing countries'.

[20] Government land distribution schemes have 'typically distributed land to household heads, a process that favours men in general and specifically the more senior men who already have power through customary land holdings' and despite the reform of land laws, women 'may not receive plots in the reallocation process when local officials redefine them as dependents of male relatives' (Rodgers and Menon (2012): 22). Also see World Bank et al. (2008): 13 and Namubiru-Mwaura (2014): 18.

[21] See e.g. World Bank et al. (2008): 3 and Namubiru-Mwaura (2014): 9. Dorn emphasises in this respect the importance of the legitimacy of institutions and organisations that govern land use and management and that institutional transparency and accountability are necessary for equitable land allocation and management (Dorn (2006): 3).

[22] See also Crowley (2001); GENDERNET (2011): 22; Deere and Doss (2006): 15; Van Gelder (2010).

[23] See e.g. Brown and Gallant (2014): 28; PLAAS (2011): 3; World Bank et al. (2008): 5-6, 20, 24.

[24] On the implication of polygamy for women's land rights see Namubiru-Mwaura (2014): 13, 16 and World Bank et al. (2008): 18.

[25] See e.g. Dekker (2013); Daley et al. (2013); Augustinus and Deininger (2005); Meinzen-Dick et al. (1997); Agarwal (2003); Holden et al. (2007); Gomez and Tran (2012); Rodgers and Menon (2012); Lawry et al. (2014); Namubiru-Mwaura (2014); Dorn (2006); World Bank et al. (2008).

[26] On the issue of the different meanings of the concept of 'tenure security' and the relationship between the different conceptualisations see e.g. Van Gelder (2010), who distinguishes between perceived tenure security, legal or *de jure* tenure security, and *de facto* tenure security of urban dwellers. According to Van Gelder, '(in) situations where the different elements of tenure security do not coincide, titling programs are unlikely to be the right policy option' and '(a) better grasp of the concept can help in developing better indicators and also increase our knowledge about when and why certain interventions will fail and how they can be improved' (Van Gelder (2010)).

[27] According to World Bank et al. (2008) 'for widows, control over land may be one of the few ways that elderly women can elicit economic support from their children, in the form of either labor contributions to agricultural production or cash and in-kind transfers' (World Bank et al. (2008): 1). In Sub-Saharan Africa this has become more important because of the increase of the number of female-headed households because of HIV/Aids.

[28] A study on land titling in urban Buenos Aires only found 'a modest but positive effect of land titling on access to mortgage credit, and no impact on access to other forms of credit' but that 'moving a poor household from usufructuary land rights to full property rights substantially increased investment in the houses' (Galiani and Schargrodsky (2010): 711).

[29] Brown and Gallant (2014): 20; Rodgers and Menon (2012): 16, 19; World Bank et al. (2008): 1. Dorn (2006) in this respect refers to gender equity in access to assets is a valuable outcome in its own right because it can lead to greater mobility for women, increased political awareness, and fewer incidents of domestic violence (Dorn (2006): 2).

[30] See Gomez and Tran (2012) and FAO et al. (2010).

[31] In the case of inheritance reform in India (the Hindu Succession Act), Deininger et al. (2014) find a positive impact on girls' education regarding better performance in reading and higher completion rates at primary and secondary level in addition to more women engaging in productive work (Deininger et al. (2014): 2).

[32] See Lawry et al. (2014); Meinzen-Dick et al. (1997); and Dorn (2006).

[33] See Meinzen-Dick et al. (1997); World Bank (2005); Namubiru-Mwaura (2014); PLAAS (2011); and Daley et al. (2013) stating that '(laws) and policies should capture diversity among rural women and the ways they use land and natural resources' (Daley et al. (2013): 7).

[34] There is a FAO technical guide (Governing land for women and men: A technical guide to support the achievement of responsible gender-equitable governance of land tenure (2013)) that provides advice on how to maximise benefits from land reform for women and on mechanisms, strategies and actions that can be adopted to improve gender equity in the processes, institutions and activities of land tenure governance. For a summary of the main elements see Lock and Henley (2014): 24-25. Buvinic et al. (2013) underline the importance of 'grounding land ownership processes in social and local contexts' (Buvinic et al. (2013): 39).

[35] According to the same source, 'there is a paucity of consolidated and synthesized data on women's land rights, especially in rural areas' and 'not enough information is available to confirm their effectiveness in addressing women's land rights in rural areas' (Namubiru-Mwaura (2014): iii)

[36] See Meinzen-Dick et al. (1997); Brown and Gallant (2014): 28-29; Namubiru-Mwaura (2014); World Bank et al. (2008).

[37] See also World Bank et al. (2008): 32.

[38] Oxfam (2013) stresses in this respect that 'allotting individual land ownership with titles to the poorest or least powerful members of a community does not automatically secure them either power or wealth. On the contrary, placing individual ownership of assets in the hands of vulnerable people could lead to them losing these assets very quickly' (Oxfam (2013): 13). According to DFID (2014b), there is 'inconsistent evidence about whether individual private tenure provides better conditions for women's economic empowerment than alternative systems, including customary tenure' and about 'whether

formal individual title improves or worsens women's access to land' (DFID (2014b): 6, 33). The same source explains that '(this) is largely because authors examine different groups of women (e.g. female-headed households, unmarried women, etc.), and because the ways that women access land through social relations varies in different contexts' (DFID (2014b): 33).

39 On the complications related to the notion of co-ownership in the African context see Joireman (2008), stating amongst others that '(in) the few African countries where there are laws providing for the co-ownership of marital property such as the family home or other assets, these laws have proven very difficult to enforce because they go against the grain of cultural practice' (Joireman (2008): 1238). See further Hazel (2014): 18 and DFID (2014b): 49.

40 Along the same lines, Budiender and Alma state that '(building) alliances and partnerships and stronger women's movements will provide a more effective platform from which to advocate women's secure access to land. It will also build the capacity of women by encouraging the exchange of information about land administration systems and other practicalities that affect their land rights' (Budiender and Alma (2011): 73). On the broader relevance of farmer groups, associations or collectives see e.g. Buvinic et al. (2013): 40-41 and Oxfam's publication 'Women's collective action: unlocking the potential of agricultural markets' (2013). Benefits are related to linking to markets, overcoming market failure (e.g. unequal access to information), dissemination of extension messages, and the use of group savings. On the more critical side, groups demand time and money – of which women farmers are generally short – and there is a risk of elite capture.

41 See also World Bank (2014) referring to the importance of combining policy reforms and programmatic interventions with 'awareness raising for women, men and local leaders (including customary and religious leaders) on women's rights as well as on the benefits of women's land ownership' (World Bank (2014): 140). Likewise, the importance of educating women (and men) on land rights is underscored in Buvinic et al. (2013): 39-40.

42 The same source refers in this respect to the importance of combining a mass media effort with the sustained presence of knowledgeable people at village level (World Bank et al. (2008): 20).

43 According to the same source, '(a) multi-stakeholder platform involving both governmental and non-governmental organizations is an important precondition for effecting the implementation and continuous monitoring of policies aimed at ensuring women's land tenure security' (Paradza (2011): 4).

6

Women and water and sanitation

‘At a policy level, it is also recognized that infrastructure development needs to be gender aware in order to realize gender benefits’ (IFC (2012): iv).

6.1 Introduction

Gender equality and its importance for access to good quality infrastructure has been firmly on the international policy agenda in the last 10 years. This has been accompanied by a political commitment to promote gender equality and take action to address it through infrastructure development and an awareness 'that infrastructure development needs to be gender aware in order to realize gender benefits' (IFC (2012): iv).

With respect to the water sector this is e.g. already evident from the Dublin International Conference on Water and the Environment and the Rio Conference on sustainable development of 1992, the Beijing World Conference on Women of 1995, the 2nd World Water Forum that was held in The Hague in 2000 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development of Johannesburg of 2002. The reasoning in this respect has been as follows:

- The lack of or insufficient provision of physical facilities – from roads to water and sanitation – results in a far greater time burden on women than on men because of a gender-based household division of labour;
- Women would thus benefit more if this situation were improved, i.e. '(well) designed infrastructure projects can bring significant positive benefits for women and girls by improving access to markets, schools, and health services or improving women's safety'[1];
- Improving domestic infrastructure may ease women's time constraints – which may, in turn, 'free up time for educational opportunities, productive work, and participation in community life and decision making' (GENDERNET (2011): 24).[2]

Still, '(while) the evidence is clear on the need for infrastructure investments as part of a comprehensive agenda to increase gender equality in the world of work, there have been few rigorous evaluations on the effect of large-scale infrastructure projects on women's time allocation' (World Bank (2013): 62). Consequently, it is not possible to give a concise overview of 'what works?' on the relationship between infrastructure and gender equality in this chapter.

The following paragraphs provide a short overview on the importance of paying attention to women's infrastructure needs and demands in general and with respect to water and sanitation in particular.

6.2 Women and infrastructure

In infrastructure, the specific needs and service demands of (poor) women's are often different from those of men. They are also different from what the wealthier strata of society would like to see in this respect. Therefore, when planning infrastructure, the different needs and interests of women and men and their ability to pay for the use of this infrastructure need to be considered.

Infrastructure development is thus not simply a technocratic question. It is *not* gender-neutral but 'requires combining supply-side issues of technical design specifications for provision of infrastructure services with demand-side dimensions of who uses infrastructure, for what purposes, how it is paid for, and with what impacts on individuals, households, and communities'.[3]

This necessitates efforts 'to support women's involvement and to convince both women and men of the benefits' to address 'practical and cultural obstacles to women's equal participation in management and decision making' (OECD (2006): 29-30).[4] Moreover, there are instrumental arguments (the 'business case') for addressing gender issues in infrastructure: meaningful participation of (poor) women and men improves project effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

Various reports show nevertheless that integrating gender aspects in infrastructure programmes has been an arduous task: there have been 'very real difficulties translating (...) political and policy commitments into practice on the ground'. This holds particularly, although with some exceptions in the field of water and sanitation, for large-scale infrastructure projects.[5] A study on water users' associations in South Asia of 2003 refers in this respect to the low participation of women in these organisations, despite their high involvement in irrigated agriculture and agricultural decision making (Meinzen-Dick and Zwarteveen (2003)).[6] An IFC literature review on the gender impact of public private partnerships in infrastructure moreover found scarce evidence 'on actual demonstrable impacts on women and girls', reflecting the more general concern that 'many infrastructure projects do not attempt to take account of the full range of positive and negative social and economic impacts of infrastructure' (IFC (2012): 7, 22).

6.3 Women and water and sanitation

With respect to water and sanitation, it is known that women, and to a lesser degree girls, are usually the ones who collect water from communal sources and often they also pay for it: lack of access continues to impact women significantly through the burden of water collection with women taking care of two-thirds of this burden (DFID (2013): 9).[7] As result, 'women are likely to be the leading beneficiaries of improved water supply and sanitation arrangements' (IOB (2007): 36).

The importance of better and more accessible water and sanitation for (poor) women and girls has been argued as follows:

- it reduces the disease burden[8]; and
- it reduces the burden and time associated with water collection, which in turn translates into school performance of girls.[9]

Better and more access to water and sanitation is sometimes also linked to an economic purpose, though with little empirical evidence to support it (Koolwal and Van de Walle (2010): 23)[10]: better access to water would free women's time to invest in income earning activities such as petty trade.[11]

A range of sources[12] refers in this respect to the importance of women's participation in training and water user committees (as a forum for women to participate in decision making (World Bank (2000): 14), the choice of technologies, site locations and local maintenance, management and financing systems and in sharing in the burdens and benefits during operations. At the same time, it is underscored that 'mechanisms for water management and access are shaped by other societal relationships and structures of inequality' and that existing inequalities (poverty, caste, etc.) may limit women's chances to effectively raise their voice through community water management systems (Cleaver and Hamada (2010): 32-35).

On the issue of women's participation, there is ample evidence that in practice, women often face specific obstacles to participating in projects and programmes, in joining and participating in water-user committees, or in getting elected to positions on water committees or village development committees. Women and men may also differ in capacities and forms in which they can support water and sanitation: women often have less time to devote to new activities or to participate in committees and have lower literacy levels.

It is at the same time not clear whether increased women's participation in water user committees and having more women in leadership committees lead to better maintenance of water infrastructure. According to Dekker (2013), referring to a study on the impact of an intervention that verbally encouraged communities to increase female participation on their water users committees: increased participation in water user groups 'did not however have any effect, positive or negative, on the frequency and quality of maintenance of the water infrastructure' (Dekker (2013): 52). Along the same lines, a randomised evaluation of gender and community management of water infrastructure in Kenya found that increased participation and increased leadership had no impact on the quality of infrastructure maintenance.[13]

Notes

[1] OECD (2006): 29; Kabeer (2012): 45.

[2] See e.g. UN Millennium Project (2005): 66; GENDERNET (2011): 24; Kabeer (2012): 45.

[3] See e.g. World Bank (2010b): 1; World Bank (2010c): 4; IFC (2012): iv. In relation to transport, World Bank (2010d) calls for information on e.g.: (i) gender trip patterns and mobility constraints – that are different for women and men 'resulting in gender differences in mode of transport used as well as travel patterns in relation to trip purpose, frequency and distance of travel' and stem 'from differences in the social and economic roles of men and women, with their respective household and caretaking responsibilities'; (ii) gender transport needs, keeping in mind that women 'bear a disproportionate share of the transport burden to fulfill their economic, social, and domestic roles' (iii) the social and cultural context of gender differences affecting and affected by transport, such as time spent on social, economic and household-related tasks; (iv) women's access to means of transport, with women often having fewer transport choices and facing concerns on restrictive social and cultural rules and norms, 'personal safety and the avoidance of harassment' and spending more time on waiting for transport and paying on average a higher share of their income on transport than men' (World Bank (2010d): 9-10, 13, 15, 18, 22).

[4] See also IFC (2012): 30; UN Millennium Project (2005): 70. The World Bank observed that 'women's time constraints combined with inequitable gender norms surrounding economic and civic participation mean that in very many contexts women likely will need extra support to engage meaningfully' (World Bank (2010c): 33). Nevertheless, only 25% of researched infrastructure projects had indeed taken 'steps to support women's as well as men's full access to project benefits' in 2009 (World Bank (2010c): 4).

[5] OECD (2004): 2, 6; World Bank (2010d): 9.

[6] The study attributes this phenomenon to the following main factors: rules for membership, which determine eligibility to participate (e.g. only formal right holders to irrigated land), stereotypical ideas about the gender division of labour and about appropriate male and female behaviour, women's (presumed) inhibitions to meaningful participation (e.g. illiteracy) and the balance of 'costs' and 'benefits' to be derived from involvement, which influence individuals' willingness and ability to participate with women having less time than men to attend because of their high domestic and productive workloads.

[7] See also the UN's Millennium Development Goals Report 2008, indicating that women shoulder the bulk of responsibility for collecting water when none is available on the premises. Women are more than twice as likely as men to collect water, while children usually collect water in 11 per cent of households. More girls than boys fetch water' (United Nations (2008): 42). The same report on 2012 observes that '(according) to an analysis of data from 25 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, representing 48 per cent of the region's population, women and girls bear the primary responsibility for such water collection. Only one quarter of the population in these countries had water on their premises in 2010. For the remaining 75 per cent, water had to be collected from some distance. The time and energy devoted to this manner of water collection is considerable, even under the most conservative assumption of only one trip per day. For the 25 countries combined, it is estimated that women spend at least 16 million hours each day per round trip; men spend 6 million hours; and children, 4 million hours' (United Nations (2012): 54).

[8] According to WHO, approximately 10% of the worldwide disease burden and 88% of diarrheal diseases can be prevented through improved drinking water and sanitation, hygiene and improved water management (IOB (2012a): 36).

[9] IEG (2010): 54; DFID (2013): 9.

[10] According to Koolwal and Van de Walle (2010), using data sets from 10 countries in the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and South and South-East Asia: 'We do not find any evidence that improved access to water leads to greater off-farm work for women. However, we do find that in countries where

substantial gender gaps in schooling exist, both boys' and girls' enrollments improve as a result of a reduction in the time needed to collect water. In addition we find some signs of impacts on child health' (Koolwal and Van de Walle (2010): 24).

11 IEG (2010): 54; DFID (2013): 67.

12 See e.g. Narayan (1995): 2, 77; World Bank (2000): x, 15, 34; Gross et al. (2001): iii, v, 2, 4-5; UNDP (2003): 8-11, 13; Khosla et al. (2004): 13-14; Gender and Water Alliance and UNDP (2006): 13-15; IFAD (2007): 3, 6, 17. Using data from 88 communities in 15 countries, Gross et al. (2001) indicate in this respect that 'projects that used more gender- and poverty-sensitive demand response approaches had results that were better sustained' and that the communities involved had used water services in a 'health promoting manner' (Gross et al. (2001): v). Services were also better sustained 'when projects offer informed choices to both women and men, poor and better off' includes both women and men in water management (Gross et al. (2001): 2, 18-19).

13 Leino (2007). See also Mansuri and Rao (2014): 258-259.

7

Women's political voice

'Maybe the very question 'do women make a difference in politics?' is wrong: try 'do men make a difference in politics?' (Ballington (2008): 56).

7.1 Introduction

Women can play different roles in politics: as voters, political party members, candidates and office holders, and members of civil society. They have to operate in political systems that were established, organised and dominated by men (Karam and Lovenduski (2005): 188) and that, in many places, are not favourable to historically marginalised social groups, including women. Women's political voice is strongly related to the need for educating women, as described in chapter 3. A literature review by Kenway et al. (2014) found that women's capacity, knowledge and skills are necessary preconditions for exercising leadership, both in a political sense and outside of the political realm. Therefore, it is essential that leadership programmes are combined with basic education, including alphabetisation (Kenway et al. (2014): 1), because 'women need an education to access power' (O'Neil et al. (2015): 21-22).

This chapter first of all describes the international framework concerning women's (political) voice, with particular attention to the issue of gender quotas. It then provides information on the current state of affairs of women's participation in political life. It also provides a background on the debate on the instrumental value of increasing women's participation in politics and on women's involvement in political parties. The chapter concludes with an overview of the main issues concerning women's participation.

7.2 International framework

At global level, the issue of women's political participation – as one face of women's empowerment – has been on the agenda since the adoption of CEDAW in 1979. Article 7 of the Convention obliges States Parties to 'take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

- to vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;
- to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
- to participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country'.

Relevant is also General Recommendation #23 in relation to this Article that was issued by the CEDAW Committee in 1997.[1]

The Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 emphasised as well the need for 'women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making'. It recommended that governments set a target reserving 30% of seats in national parliaments for women as a first step toward gender equality in politics[2] – which is line with what was agreed at ECOSOC in

1990 when a similar target was set for female representation in decision-making bodies (on the issue of quotas, see text box 7.1).[3]

Text box 7.1 *On gender quotas*

In line with the international principles described above, more than 110 countries introduced gender quotas (not necessarily adhering to the 30% recommendation) to increase women's role in the political arena by 2013. In many countries, international pressure has been instrumental, especially in countries that are concerned with foreign aid, foreign investment, international reputation, and legitimacy.[4] According to some authors, this international focus on quota is because 'institutional rules are viewed as relatively easy to change and therefore as a promising gender-based governance intervention' (Horowitz (2009): 13).[5]

Different types of quota exist, often in combination, including:
- Voluntary internal party quotas (in around 60% of countries with a gender quota) that aim to increase the proportion of women among party candidates through party reform;
- Legislative candidate quotas (38% of the countries with a gender quota) which require parties to nominate a certain proportion of women among their candidates through constitutional or legal reforms; and
- Reserved seats (20% of the countries with a gender quota) that set aside a certain number of positions for women among elected representatives through constitutional reforms.

Candidate quotas only work when women are placed in winnable positions on party lists and compliance with quotas is monitored and sanctioned in case of non-compliance (UNDP and NDI (2011): 5).[6] According to Palmieri (2011), '(quotas) tend to work best when tailored to a country's electoral system, enforced with sanctions, accompanied by rules on where women should be placed on parliamentary lists, connected to a meaningful definition of participation and combined with steps to generate political and public support' (Palmieri (2011): 14).

At the same time is evident that a country's electoral system is one of the key factors in determining how many women will make it into the legislature with proportional representation offering better chances than majoritarian systems .[7] Moreover, political cultures that emphasise sexual differences and group representation also tend to have a positive influence on gender quotas (Krook et al. (2009): 9). Electoral systems, quota arrangements and other affirmative action measures taken by political parties continue to be key predictors of progress for women.

7.3 Political representation: a right or an instrument?

Having more women into politics, and henceforth the importance of gender quotas, has been argued from two main angles – at times simultaneously.

7.3.1 The rights-based approach

The first angle is that women and men are the same and since they make 'up half the population so it is only fair and right that women have equal representation in legislatures that make decisions over their lives' (Tinker (2004): 533).[8] The following arguments are used:

- increasing women's presence in Government may be valued 'of its own sake' (Dollar et al. (2001): 427);
- 'equality of opportunity in politics is a human right' (UN Millennium project (2005): 104);
- 'women's right to equal representation in formal political systems needs to be recognised as a fundamental part of the project of democratization' (Alcântara Costa (2010): 25);
- '(women's) equal and meaningful participation and influence in decision making at all levels, and in both formal and informal spaces, is fundamentally a question of social justice', making sure that 'the priorities, skills and needs of women are reflected in the policies, laws, institutions and service delivery by community, local, national and international governance structures' (GDN et al. (2015): 44).[9]

This right to participate in political life is guaranteed by several international conventions. According to the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation #23 (1997), '(societies) in which women are excluded from public life and decision-making cannot be described as democratic. The concept of democracy will have real and dynamic meaning and lasting effect only when political decision-making is shared by women and men and takes equal account of the interests of both'.

7.3.2 Instrumental evidence

The second angle is clearly instrumental. The argument is that women are different from men and bring to governing distinct attributes, different visions and concepts of politics that encourage a more compassionate and less-corrupt society (Tinker (2004): 533; Bari (2005): 1). According to this line of reasoning, women's participation in politics is likely to have 'important spinoffs' for benefits to society in general (Dollar et al. (2001): 428) or that 'when such policy actors are female, they are more cognizant of and/or receptive to women's needs and preferences, and they may be more willing to allocate resources to meeting them' (Horowitz (2009): 7).

Whether this is indeed the case at the level of national parliaments is another matter since 'the women who enter national parliaments are not generally drawn from the ranks of poor people, nor is there any guarantee that they will be more responsive to the needs and priorities of poor women than many men in parliament'. When hand-picked from an elite with no grassroot constituency to represent and answer to, their presence in governance structures of society 'will only be a token one' (Kabeer (2005): 22, 24). Women are not homogeneous groups but, like men, 'are divided along the line of class, ethnicity, religion and rural/urban background' and the

gender gap in politics cannot simply be changed by adding more women with political structures dominated by elite women (Bari (2005): 6). Also issues such as party loyalty are easily overlooked when looking for the impact of increased influence of women on decision-making (Tinker (2004): 231).[10]

Another issue with respect to the instrumental approach is that the link between women's presence in politics, their influence over political outcomes and, in the end, the outcomes as such – has not been the subject of a lot of research.[11] However, what is clear is that impact is likely to vary from country to another. It depends on the economic and political context, the rules of the parliamentary game, the number of women elected etc.

Much of the evidence from developing countries, which is contradictory at times and not as straightforward as would seem from the 2014 World Bank document ' Voice, Agency and Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity'[12], comes moreover from India's system for elections at *village level* (see text box 7.2).[13] As stated in a recent ODI report, overall 'we have a limited understanding of how women navigate what happens at the intersection of formal institutions (quota systems, political party systems, regime types) and the informal rules and networks of political decision-making – and the impact this has for gender equality agendas' (Domingo et al. (2015): 14-15).[14]

Text box 7.2 *Outcomes of research on the quota system in India*

In India, the village council is responsible for the provision of local infrastructure – such as public buildings, water, and roads – and for identifying government programme beneficiaries. Since 1998, one third of the councillor positions at this level and one third of the *Pradhan* positions, with the *Pradhan* elected by the councillors, are randomly 'reserved' for women. Researchers, focusing on the (randomly assigned) gender of the *Pradhan* and not on the mandatory one-third female reservation of village council posts, studied the effects of this policy on: (i) women's participation in village meetings, (ii) local policy, and (iii) changes in attitudes (aspirations, voice and perceptions on female leadership). In brief, the main findings are as follows.[15]

Having a *Pradhan* position reserved for women in earlier elections, motivated women to stand for this position in the village council. There is also evidence 'that women and other excluded groups are more likely to run for non-mandated seats once they have had some experience on a mandated seat' (Mansuri and Rao (2014): 10). Their chances of winning these elections were also higher in this case, especially when seats had been reserved for women for more than one term (Beaman et al. (2009) and (2012)) indicating that 'lasting change requires that the inclusion mandates remain in place for long enough to change perceptions and social norms' (Mansuri and Rao (2014): 10; 276). This is partly attributed to improved ratings of their performance, also among male voters. Women were also more likely to attend and speak out at village meetings when the *Pradhan* position was reserved for a woman (Beaman et al. (2010); Dekker (2013): 7).

The picture on the impact of having a woman *Pradhan* on the provision of public goods is at the same time mixed. Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004) suggest that when the *Pradhan* is a woman, the provision of public goods is on average more closely aligned to the preferences of women than to those of men (Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004): 1409, 1411, 1431, 1440). The explanation is that the preferences of women *Pradhans* are more aligned to those of women, and that therefore, they end up serving women better (Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004): 1431; Duflo (2004): 5-7).

Other studies however find no such evidence or find that having women taking the helm does not have any impact on the targeting of local government programmes on women headed or landless households.[16] Vissandjee et al. (2005) argue that simply fulfilling the quantitative quotas 'does not guarantee a level playing field for women in the political arena' (Vissandjee et al. (2005): 132).

On impact on the next generation, some sources indicate that children were better off e.g. completion of immunisation and access to government day care) in villages with women leaders for longer periods (Beaman et al. (2007)). Also a closing of the gender gap in aspirations is observed: with both parents and adolescents having higher aspirations for girls in villages that were assigned a female leader for two periods in a row (Beaman et al. (2012): 582).[17] The presence of elected women leadership as positive role models contributed to higher girls' educational attainment, a reduction in the gender gap in educational outcomes, and a reduction in the time girls spent on household chores. According to Pathak and Macours, the reservation policy in the long-term impacted on learning outcomes of primary school children when they were exposed to reservation very early in life because of ' improved health and nutritional environment in utero and during the first years of life' (Pathak and Macours (2013): 13).

Iyer et al. find that the introduction of the quota system at village leads to large and statistically significant increases in the number of reported crimes against women (rather than a rise in the actual crimes committed against women) and that 'political representation is an important means of providing voice to disadvantaged groups within the criminal justice system' (Iyer et al. (2011): 1-2, 5, 23). However, having 'local council reservations has a much larger effect on documented crimes against women, than having the district chairperson post reserved for women' (Iyer et al. (2011): 31). At the same time, no overall deterioration in law and order was observed; rather, people reported a positive change in police attitudes (with less bribes paid) and police efforts, e.g. an increased number of arrests (Iyer et al. (2011): 6, 22, 34). No similar impact was observed at district level and no effect of the presence of women in the state legislature: 'It is the presence of women in the broad base of political representatives' – i.e. there 'where they have greatest proximity to potential crime victims' – rather than in leadership positions at higher levels of governance per se, that generates a more powerful impact on reporting of crimes' (Iyer et al. (2011): 2, 8-9, 31-32).

Once again, all these reported results at outcome and impact level only apply to village councils in India.

According to UNDP and the National Democratic Institute of the US, having more women in parliament makes it more likely that parliament addresses women's issues and influences 'the nature of the debate in politics' (UNDP and NDI (2011): 8; 37). Domingo et al. (2012) on the other hand observe that 'the extent to which women politicians can set agendas and be accountable to constituencies for these depends not only on their political commitment to gender equality (not to be taken for granted) but also on the nature of the (formal and informal) institutional settings and the national and sub-national levels they operate at' (Domingo et al. (2012): 26).

Finally, an issue not often mentioned is the risk of backlash when talking about women's political participation. In their literature review, Kenway et al. (2014) come across studies about women who, due to hampering cultural attitudes, are faced with increased levels of violence – including sexual violence – after seeking political office. This occurred not only in countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka where gender based violence is commonplace, but also in the Pacific region women with political ambitions were faced with sexual harassment, including rape, and physical abuse (Kenway et al. (2014): 12-13).

7.4 Women's participation in politics

7.4.1 Women politicians – the data

While overall gender-disparities in voting participation have been on the decline since World War II and the number of women candidates for national office seems to be on the increase, the overall picture is still that women 'remain underrepresented in leadership positions in politics and business across the globe' (Pande and Ford (2011): 1). Laws restricting women's rights to vote and stand for elections still exist in several countries in the Middle East. The available evidence suggests that women's access to politics is not simply a matter of national wealth, of women's educational attainment or of increasing their labour force participation. There is also no 'significant effect of democratization on the level of women's representation in cross-regional data sets' (Horowitz (2009): 8, 11).[18] Still, the proportion of women in national parliaments was included in the MDGs as one of the key indicators for the achievement of gender equality.

While it is clear that women's numerical representation says little about their meaningful engagement and influence in decision making, data on women's political participation – table 7.1 provides information on several (former) Dutch partner countries – are illustrative of their absence from key decision-making bodies[19]:

- In January 2008, women accounted for 7 of the 150 elected heads of state and 8 of the 192 heads of governments of UN Member States; three years later these figures were 10 and 13 respectively. According to the UN in 2014, the number of female Heads of State or Heads of Government in the world has gone up to 15 elected female heads of state in January 2014.
- The share of women holding a ministerial post shows great variation among individual countries (0-58%).[20] According to the UN in 2008, only 16% of the world's ministerial

positions were held by women. This increased slightly to just over 17% by January 2014 when there were 36 countries with 30% or more female ministers. Women not only deal with the traditionally so-called 'soft' portfolios (Social Affairs, Education and Women's Affairs), but are increasingly holding some of the so-called 'hard' ministerial portfolios (Defence, Foreign Affairs and Environment).

- The global average share of women in parliament (combining upper and lower houses) stood at 22% in 2014 and 20% in 2012 and 2013. This share was 18% in 2009, 14% in 2000, 12% in 1995 and 9% in 1987. According to the UN, '(with) the exception of 2007, the average annual rate of increase in recent years has been just 0.5 percentage points' (UN (2013): 22). The share of women in parliament also shows great variation across regions and across countries. Country wise, high performers in recent years have included Rwanda, Sweden, South Africa and Cuba. By 2014 there were more than 30% female members in parliament in some 46 countries, up from 24 in 2009. At the same time, there were 5 countries without a woman in parliament in 2014, down from 9 in 2011. From a regional perspective, women's share in parliament in Northern Africa, Oceania and Western Asia continues to be well below the global average.
- Less than 5% of the world's mayors are women while the share of women among locally elected councillors varies, equalling 8% of the councillors in Northern Africa and 30% in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to GDN et al. '(women) account for only 20 percent of elected councilors; and hold mayoral positions in only 10 of the world's 195 capital cities' (GDN et al. (2014): 47).[21]
- The gap between women and men on political empowerment remains: only 19% of the political outcomes gap was closed in 2010 and 21% in 2014 (Hausmann et al. (2010): 7, 19 and Hausmann et al. (2014): 12).

Table 7.1 Women's share in parliament and ministerial positions in (former) Dutch aid partner countries[22]

	Type of quota				% of women in parliament (lower house)			% of women in ministerial positions		
	Reserved seats	Legislated candidate quota	Voluntary political party quota	No quota	2000	2007	2014	2005	2010	2014
Afghanistan	■				n.a.	28	28	10	4	11
Bangladesh	■				9	15	20	8	16	7
Benin				■	6	11	8	19	22	22
Bolivia		■			12	17	25	7	24	33
Burkina Faso		■			8	15	19	15	14	14
Burundi	■				14	31	31	11	30	36
Colombia		■			12	8	20	n.a.	n.a.	31
DRC		■			n.a.	8	11	13	12	10
Egypt		■			2	2	2	6	9	10
Ethiopia				■	8	22	28	6	7	13
Georgia			■		7	9	12	n.a.	n.a.	21
Ghana				■	n.a.	11	11	12	22	23
Guatemala			■		9	12	13	25	0	27
Indonesia		■			8	12	17	11	11	12
Kenya	■				4	7	19	10	15	33
Mali			■		12	10	10	19	21	12
Moldova				■	8	22	18	n.a.	n.a.	28
Mongolia		■			11	7	15	n.a.	n.a.	17
Mozambique			■		30	35	39	13	26	29
Netherlands			■		**36**	**39**	**39**	**36**	**24**	**47**
Nicaragua		■			10	19	42	n.a.	n.a.	57
Pakistan	■				n.a.	21	21	6	4	0
Palestinian territories				■	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Rwanda		■			26	49	64	36	33	39
Senegal		■			12	22	43	n.a.	n.a.	16
South Africa			■		30	33	41	41	34	37
South Sudan	■				n.a.	n.a.	27	n.a.	8	23
Sudan	■				n.a.	18	24	3	6	16
Suriname				■	n.a.	26	12	12	n.a.	6
Tanzania	■				n.a.	30	36	15	27	37
Uganda	■				18	31	35	23	32	32
Vietnam				■	26	26	24	12	4	9
Yemen				■	0.7	0.3	0.3	3	6	9
Zambia				■	10	15	11	25	19	15

Coming back to the quota system mentioned above, UN data indicates that in 2009, the average share of women elected to parliament was 27% in countries that applied a quota system and 14% in countries that did not. Similar figures were reported in 2012 while in 2013, women took 24% of parliamentary seats in countries with legal quotas, 22% in countries with voluntary quotas and 12% in countries without a quota (UN (2012): 25; UN (2013): 22). This confirms that, on average, female representation is higher in countries with any type of gender quota than in those without a quota (Pande and Ford (2011): 3, 13, 26).[23] Other sources come to different conclusions, indicating that 'the mere advent of gender quotas has not resulted in uniform increases in the percentage of women in parliament worldwide': some countries have seen 'dramatic increases', others more modest changes or even setbacks in the number of women elected (Krook et al. (2009): 9). Quotas 'interact in various ways with features of the broader political context' (idem).

Still, while important, quotas in themselves are not enough: quotas 'are not a panacea, and will only be successful when they are used as one of many strategies for women's enhanced political participation' (De Silva de Alwis (2014): 30). They should be accompanied by a political commitment to gender equality, sanctions for non-compliance with the quota system, political parties must be supportive and put women candidates in winnable positions on party lists (UN (2014): 23). Moreover, in the case of Mali, 'political parties have interpreted the quota's minimum requirement as a threshold to meet, rather than a level to exceed' thereby turning the quota into a new 'glass ceiling' (Kang (2013): 8).

7.4.2 Women politicians – representation and results

An important question when discussing women's political participation is furthermore: who gets elected, whom do they represent and what do they vote?

On who gets elected, the literature indicates that opinions differ. According to some, quotas do not 'necessarily result in equal access for all women, but rather often those who are privileged with respect to socio-economic advantages, education and other factors' (Greenberg and Zuckerman (2006): 6).[24] Krook et al. (2009) on the other hand mention that there has been little research on exactly what kinds of women benefit from quota, despite the often expressed objections that quota will only lead to the election of elite women (Krook et al. (2009): 15-17). Still, numbers matter, since 'women's increased presence in parliament can, at a minimum, facilitate the articulation of women's concerns and alter the gender dynamics. At a maximum, increased numbers can result in women's leadership in sponsoring bills, working in committees or amending laws that transform and benefit communities and the society as a whole' (Ballington (2008): 59).

The literature is reserved as well on the question whom these elected women represent:

- '(women) elected through quota systems often do not champion gender issues' (Castillejo (2012): 4)
- 'having more women in power will not necessarily lead to better representation of a broader constituency of women or of gender issues' (Popovic et al. (2010): 16);

- (it) is not clear, however, if the women elected through a quota system necessarily have 'women's interests' at the forefront of their thinking and policy-making' (Miller et al. (2014): 5);
- women who enter national parliaments 'tend not to be drawn from the ranks of the poor in any part of the world, nor is there any guarantee that they will be more responsive to the needs and priorities of poor women than many men in parliament' (Kabeer (2003): 188; Kenway et al. (2014): 20).[25]

Moreover, in non-democratic regimes, gender quotas may be implemented for purely symbolic purposes, to create new avenues for patronage or to gain legitimacy within the global community – resulting in high numbers of women in legislature but without having any real power.[26] However, as the literature points out, quota legislation on its own is 'insufficient (…) to achieve the full and equal participation of women in politics' (Markham (2013): 3). Or, as observed by Domingo et al. (2012), '(whilst) achieving greater numbers of women in office is crucial, translating presence into actual influence for agenda setting and access to *real* decision-making processes remains a challenge. Moreover, women's presence in parliament does not ensure loyalty to a political agenda for gender equality' (Domingo et al. (2012): vi). Still, 'the introduction of quota systems in legislatures, party lists, cabinet positions, bureaucracies and the civil service may increase the presence of women in political and decision-making bodies. Getting women into public office in itself constitutes an equality gain, and legal change that facilitates this is therefore important. Moreover, increasing the presence of women in public or elected office is itself a gender equality gain, and therefore a legitimate objective' (Domingo et al. (2012): 3).

Information on the impact of having more women in parliament is less well researched and focuses on two aspects: (i) that it leads to more attention to women's, children's and family issues; and (ii) that it improves the quality of governance and reduces corruption.

Attention to women's issues

On the first issue, research indicates that '(women) are often more active in supporting laws benefiting women, children, and families' and that '(the) likelihood that women will promote such laws rises when there is a critical mass of women leaders and when there are mechanisms to institutionalize collective action such as women's caucuses or multiparty women's alliances' (UN Millennium Project (2005): 104-105). This is shown to have been the case in the US and Western Europe, though it varies across issues and activities, and for selected countries in Latin America. According to Schwindt-Bayer (2006) women place more priority than men on women's, children's and family issues[27] and are more likely to sponsor legislation in these areas, even though both men and women view these as 'important political concerns' (Schwindt-Bayer (2006): 1, 4-6, 10, 18). A survey done in Sweden indicates that women were more likely than men to raise issues of social policy, family policy, care of the elderly or health care in their election campaigns. According to the survey, gender equality is among the issues that women have put on the political agenda; without them there would be silence on this topic (Wängnerud (2005): 243). Finally, Markham refers to OECD research findings that 'an increase in the number of women legislators results in an increase in total educational spending' (Markham (2013): 7, 8).

The study of the Inter-Parliamentarian Union (*Equality in Politics*) which is based on a survey among 272 parliamentarians from 110 countries found in this respect the following (Ballington (2008): 1-3, 32, 43-44). Women parliamentarians reported that they tend to emphasise: (i) social issues, such as childcare, equal pay, parental leave and pensions; (ii) physical concerns, including reproductive rights, physical safety and gender-based violence; (iii) development, which includes human development, the alleviation of poverty and delivery of services; and (iv) gender equality laws and electoral reforms that enhance women's access to parliaments. Still, though women are more likely to introduce legislation related to women's concerns and family issues, it is 'difficult to assess the legislative impact of women across all regions, however, as there is little in the way of comparative research in this area' (Ballington (2008): 44).[28] Partly these findings are linked to women's membership of parliamentary committees: women remain concentrated in committees that deal with the same social issues and are often absent from the debate on e.g. economy, finance and foreign affairs.

In addition, as Kenway et al. (2014) state: 'If part of the rationale for women's leadership is that women are able to bring something different to the leadership arena in terms of articulating their own needs and interests, as well as using different ways to influence change, then it follows that men could also exhibit these types of attributes if focus was placed on allowing these to develop' (Kenway et al. (2014): 16). What is more, a distinction needs to be made between the legislative *process* and the legislative *outcome*. A study on legislative behaviour by female parliamentarians from Argentina (which was among the first countries in the world to introduce legislation on gender-quota) showed that 'more women's rights bills were introduced (both by men and women) when women held a greater share of seats in both chambers. However, the approval rates of these bills actually declined' (Htun et al. (2013): 95-97). So having more female parliamentarians does not necessarily mean that more 'women-friendly' bills are passed. As an extreme example: Rwanda, one of the countries with the highest level of female parliamentarians (see table 7.1), adopted a labour law in 2009 that cut in half the length of publicly paid maternity leave (Htun et al. (2013): 96-97).

Women and corruption

On the issue of better governance and less corruption, a range of authors reports that having more women in a country's parliament improves the quality of governance reduces the level of corruption, implying 'that women will be less likely to sacrifice the common good for personal (material) gain' (Dollar et al. (2001): 423-424).[29] Others nuance this position, come up with mixed evidence or come up with contradictory findings and suggest that 'some caution needs to be taken in asserting that increased female participation will lower corruption in all countries' (Alatas et al. (2006): 14; Michailova and Melnykovska (2009): 8). Different arguments justify such caution.

First of all, Esaray and Chirillo (2013) find that 'women are more disapproving of corruption than men where (democratic) institutions suppress corruption but equally approving otherwise (in autocratic contexts)'and that '(female) participation in government would only reduce corruption in functional democracies where the electorate tends to punish

corruption via removal from office' (Esarey and Chirillo (2013): 369, 384).[30] This explains also the observation of Transparency International that 'it could be questioned whether women are intrinsically less corrupt, or whether it is democracy which is the underlying condition behind the argument that more women's participation in government, is associated with less corruption. In fact, countries where women are more represented in government tend to also have more liberal democratic institutions, providing for more effective checks on corruption as well as 'fairer systems' that promote gender equality' (Transparency International (2014): 2).[31]

Secondly, Alatas et al. (2006) find that cross-country variation in female behaviour and attitudes vis-à-vis corruption 'may be influenced to a greater degree by their cultural surrounds' and 'may reflect the differences in the social roles of men and women' (Alatas et al. (2006): 2, 14). Similar conclusions are reached by Branisa and Ziegler (2011), finding that corruption is higher in countries where social institutions deprive women of their freedom to participate in social life, even accounting for democracy and representation of women in political and economic life as well as for other variables. In such a context, 'neither political reforms towards democracy nor increasing the representation of women in political and economic positions might be enough to reduce corruption' (Branisa and Ziegler (2011): 1; Transparency International (2014)).

Finally, women as new comers on the political scene are more restricted in their opportunities for corrupt behaviour (Goetz (2007)). It is their inexperience that counts rather than their preferences since, particularly in socially conservative societies, 'it is difficult for women to become either clients or patrons in the male-dominated patronage networks through which corrupt exchanges occur' (Horowitz (2009): 18).[32]

7.4.3 Women politicians and political parties

Political parties are one key avenue for women's participation in politics: they recruit and select candidates and determine a country's political agenda. Also at this level, and for reasons that mirror those identified above, women participate less and are underrepresented in positions of power (UNDP and NDI (2011): 1). According to UNDP and NDI (2011): 'If strategies to promote women's involvement in the political process are to be effective, they should be linked to steps parties can take across the specific phases of the electoral cycle (...) and to the organization and financing of the parties themselves' (UNDP and NDI (2011): 2; also see text box 7.3 on the suggested strategies). Still, 'political parties have a mixed record in addressing gender issues in governance' (UNDP and NDI (2011): 38) and according to Domingo et al. (2012) '(focusing) mostly on parties in some contexts where these are likely to remain captured by elite and patriarchal interests is not an effective strategy' (Domingo et al. (2012): vii).[33] According to the same source, it is necessary that the particular features of the political party system and the political parties themselves (their internal democracy, accountability between party and state and society) – as the gatekeepers to formal political participation – are problematised (Domingo et al. (2012): 26). Likewise, Ballington (2008) refers to limits set on addressing women's issues and concerns because of party politics and discipline – it is unlikely that gender identity will trump party identity (Ballington (2008): 50).

Text box 7.3 *Strategies for addressing gender equality in political parties*

UNDP and NDI (2011) suggest the following strategies for enhancing gender equality in internal party organisation:

- Address gender equality in internal party regulations (e.g. by having clear and formal rules of recruitment and nomination).
- Adopt measures for women's participation in governing boards and decision-making structures (as well as key party committees, task forces, etc.).
- Set targets for women's participation in party conventions.
- Establish women's wings and sections within political parties to allow women party members to meet, discuss and deliberate, articulate their priorities, and seek solutions to common problems.
- Ensure a gender equality perspective in policy development, ensuring that party policies and priorities respond to the needs of women and men.
- Enforce the implementation of the quota system and address gender inequality in the candidate recruitment process by: (i) galvanising and formalising party support for candidate quotas; (ii) establishing clear and transparent guidelines for candidate recruitment in party nomination committees; (iii) ensuring implementation of the quota system and putting women in winnable positions; (iv) work with civil society to monitor compliance; (v) cultivate strategic alliances with men; and (vi) expand the pool of women candidates and provide skills training.
- Address financial issues that women face in electoral campaigns, e.g. by establishing fundraising networks, establishing an internal party fund for women candidates, public funding of political parties or by subsidising women candidates and setting limits on nomination and campaign expenditures.
- Undertake actions during the campaign and electoral period regarding: (i) training and mentoring of women candidates (campaigning skills, working with the media, etc.); (ii) ensuring women's visibility in campaigns (television, posters, access to campaign machinery); (iii) identify and disseminate party positions on issues that are priorities for women (such as gender based violence); (iv) monitoring the voting process and checking for irregularities; and (v) gender-sensitive voter information.

7.5 What are the main issues?

Unlike previous chapters, this section does not present an overview of what works due to the fact that no studies were found containing suggestions for approaches and interventions. Instead, table 7.2 provides a summary of the main issues when addressing women's political participation. This summary also shows that the support in this area would benefit from structured analysis 'that integrates social and political analysis, including of the political economy of context-specific gender equality barriers to political participation, into programming and implementation' (Domingo et al. (2012): vii).

Table 7.2 SWOT analysis on women's political participation[34]	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Affirmative action in the form of quotas. • National instruments such as gender-sensitive Constitutional provisions on political participation of women. • National machineries for the advancement of women (e.g. ministries for women and gender) – even though these are often weak in mandate and human and financial resources. • Civil society and women's organisations providing women with the opportunity to come into public space. • Civil society and women's organisations working at community level to change attitudes and promote women's leadership, campaigning and networking skills and provide capacity building to women to effectively perform political jobs once they are in office. • Political will from (some) governments and political parties that provide quotas for women's representation. • Existence of women-in-politics role models.	• Lack of enforcement of quotas and insufficient women to fill the seats in parliament. • Cultural and religious beliefs and gender norms that hinder women's mobility, keeps them silent in the presence of men, affect their confidence to pursue a political career and influence how women are perceived by voters, party leaders and media. • Political participation captured by elite women and/or male dominated (informal) patronage networks preventing women from converting presence into influence. • Women's presence in political forums does not guarantee actual influence in political processes or a qualitative change in political society – this is influenced by context-specific factors such as regime type and electoral or political party system. Moreover, political power is regularly brokered outside formal political institutions. • Persistent negative attitudes towards and stereotyping of female leaders, also in mainstream media – who are often judged to be less experienced and to lack 'masculine traits' such as leadership – perpetuating myths that women cannot or should not take on leadership roles or participate in decision-making. • Lack of political will within ruling governments and electoral laws and legal frameworks that do not translate constitutional provisions. • Failure by political parties to promote female candidates and appoint women in leadership roles. • Women's multiple roles at household level and related time burdens – i.e. the way the political system is organised does not always tally with the way women have to organise their day life. • Comparatively high illiteracy rates among women. • Comparatively high level of poverty among women and (poor) women who are unable to raise funds for election campaigns and face high opportunity costs in participation, especially if it displaces income-earning opportunities, which leads to the so-called middle-class effect documented in some places. • Costs of obtaining identity cards, necessary for electoral and candidacy registration, were a major obstacle to ensuring electoral participation and meeting the legal quotas for women's representation.

Table 7.2 SWOT analysis on women's political participation[34]	
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Existence of international and regional legal instruments (such as CEDAW, Maputo Protocol, UNSCR 1325) as benchmarks to help frame national laws and policies and their implementation. • Gender sensitive international support that tags financial support to women's participation in politics and governance issues. • Improvements in women's education levels and better access to modern ICT. • Slow yet growing change of mentality on women's political role among women and men and greater acceptance of women's political leadership roles. • The post-conflict moment of political change can create special opportunities for women to embed new rules about gender equality in state-building processes. • Initiatives to tackle discriminatory social norms that obstruct women's participation in decision-making at all levels.	• Patriarchal nature of institutional framework and the political system pushing women back into the private sphere. • Inconsistent and insufficient long-term support (both financial and political) from the donor community. • Lack of general security and political unrest that tends to affect women more. • Increasing costs of nomination and election campaigns, with women facing specific challenges in raising funds and getting access to money networks. • Integration of gender equality into policies is not always the result of an endogenous initiative but due to pressure from the international community. • Ideology, values and standards evolve very slowly. • Backlash in the form of violence against women running for office (women politicians risking rape and physical abuse).

Given these context-specific and complex issues, it is understandable for Domingo et al. (2012) to conclude that, 'the primacy of domestic factors and the long-term nature of women's empowerment demand that external actors be realistic about how much they can contribute to transformative change in practice and over what timescales' (Domingo et al. (2012): 5).

Notes

[1] This recommendation inter alia stresses that the obligation specified in article 7 of CEDAW ‘extends to all areas of public and political life’ and that ‘(the) political and public life of a country is a broad concept’ that: (i) ‘refers to the exercise of political power, in particular the exercise of legislative, judicial, executive and administrative powers’; (ii) ‘covers all aspects of public administration and the formulation and implementation of policy at the international, national, regional and local levels’; and (iii) ‘also includes many aspects of civil society, including public boards and local councils and the activities of organizations such as political parties, trade unions, professional or industry associations, women’s organizations, community-based organizations and other organizations concerned with public and political life’.

[2] This 30% rule goes back to Dahlerup’s publication ‘From a Small to a Large Minority: Women in Scandinavian Politics’ of 1988. It is related to the concept of having a critical gender mass: ‘women are not likely to have a major impact on legislative outcomes until they grow from a few token individuals into a considerable minority of all legislators: only as their numbers increase will women be able to work more effectively together to promote women-friendly policy change and to influence their male colleagues to accept and approve legislation promoting women’s concerns’ (Childs and Krook (2008): 725; Pedwell (2008): 26). It has also been used to justify measures to bring more women into political office to be able to impact parliamentary debates and laws (Baliamoune-Lutz (2013): 2, 15). According to Horowitz (2009): ‘Assuming a shared perspective among women as a unified group is a key basis for the critical mass argument widely employed by international organizations, transnational women’s networks, and party activists. However, the empirical evidence for this claim should be tested’ (Horowitz (2009): 15).

[3] Also in other international forums similar recommendations were agreed upon. See e.g. the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (July 2003) which states that States Parties ‘shall take specific positive action to promote participative governance and the equal participation of women in the political life of their countries through affirmative action, enabling national legislation and other measures’ and ‘shall ensure increased and effective representation and participation of women at all levels of decision-making’. See also Kang (2014): 141.

[4] Sunn Bush (2011): 131; EASSI and International Alert (2012): 43.

[5] On the rationale for adopting quotas, reasons for quota reform and the different groups of women articulating quota demands see also Krook (2007): 369-370, 373.

[6] On quota and political parties see also Cornwall (2014): 13.

[7] Palmieri (2011): 10; Cornwall (2014): 13; UN (2010): 25; UN (2013): 22.

[8] This applies to women’s role in decision-making on peacebuilding as well, also see IOB (2015a).

[9] See also Bari (2005): 1; Ballington (2005): 24; Pedwell (2008): 13; Horowitz (2009): 7.

[10] On this issue see also Luttrell et al. (2009): ‘(in) some cases, it has been shown that democratisation and participation projects bring empowerment predominantly to the middle classes’ (Luttrell et al. (2009): 10). Along the same lines Pedwell (2008) observes that ‘(women’s) different social locations and experiences’ – differing in terms of by race, ethnicity, nation, culture, class, caste, sexuality, ability, religion, etc. – ‘mean that they have a range of varied needs and political interests. These differences can conflict and contribute to political outcomes not of benefit to all women’ (Pedwell (2008): 13; 26). See also Dekker (2013) referring to work done by Clots-Figuras observing that ‘female legislators from higher castes do not have any impact on ‘women-friendly’ laws, oppose land reforms, invest in higher tiers of education and reduce social expenditure’ (Dekker (2013): 50).

[11] According to Karam and Lovenduski (2005) ‘there is relatively little research and information available on what sort of impact women have made’ (Karam and Lovenduski (2005): 188).

[12] See World Bank (2014): 158-159.

[13] There is some literature on Africa, but this is less systematic and lacks 'the ability to econometrically link women's representation to outcomes' and focuses 'on either women's numerical participation or qualitative aspects of their political effectiveness' (Horowitz (2009): 31).

[14] Along the same lines, the same ODI report observes that there is '(very) little evidence exists that explicitly links women's political participation in parties to improved gender equality or future voice and leadership' (Domingo et al. (2015): 30).

[15] See also Duflo (2012): 1070-1072 and Mansuri and Rao (2014).

[16] See Bardhan et al. (2005); Bardhan et al. (2010); Besley et al. (2005); Mansuri and Rao (2014): 257-359.

[17] No evidence was found on changes in women's labour market opportunities, suggesting that 'the impact of women leaders primarily reflects a role model effect', i.e. 'their presence as positive role models for the younger generation that seems to underlie observed changes in aspirations and educational outcomes of adolescent girls' (Beaman et al. (2012): 582, 584, 586).

[18] According to Schwindt-Bayer (2006), that cross-national studies have found little effect of quotas on the election of women is 'probably explained by the variation in quota rules – the use of placement mandates, the target percentage of women, and enforcement mechanisms – that generally are not taken into account' (Schwindt-Bayer (2006): 2).

[19] See e.g. Waring (2010) and Alcântara Costa (2010).

[20] According to Ballington (2008) this was 16% overall in 2008, with 22 countries in which women held 30% or more of the ministerial posts (Ballington (2008): 15).

[21] Against this background, GDN et al. (2015), underline the importance of supporting women's meaningful local level participation and leadership: 'it is at this level that many of the decisions that affect women's lives are being made' and it 'is essential to ensure that the needs and priorities of women are reflected in local decision making processes'. Moreover, it 'can also provide critical opportunities for women to assume leadership positions which are often overlooked such as in non-governmental organisations, clubs and community centres' (GDN et al. (2015): 49).

[22] Data from www.ipu.org, www.quotaproject.org and data.worldbank.org.

[23] There is evidence that effective implementation of the quota system for several times in a row leads to an increase in the number of female candidates and – having more confidence in them and adjusting their beliefs on the role women ought to play – with more people voting for such candidates even without a quota requirement (Dekker (2013): 49). Having female leaders for some time may weaken men's stereotypes about gender roles in public and the home, and alter their perceptions about the effectiveness of female leaders (Horowitz (2009): 12).

[24] See also Pedwell (2008): 13.

[25] In her advice *The Post-2015 Development Agenda – The Millennium Development Goals in perspective* of April 2011, the AIV observed in this respect: 'The number of seats in parliament has not always proved effective in initiating women's empowerment' (AIV (2011): 31).

[26] See e.g. UN Millennium project (2005): 108-109; Horowitz (2009): 7; Cornwall (2014): 13.

[27] Also according to Markham (2013), even though women are not a homogenous group, they 'do tend to see 'women's' issues (...) more broadly as social issues, possibly as a result of the role that women have traditionally played as mothers and caregivers in their communities' and women's 'meaningful participation in politics affects both the range of policy issues that are considered and the types of solutions that are proposed' (Markham (2013): 7).

[28] See also IPU (2000): 39.

[29] See also Blackden et al. (2006): 6; UN Millennium project (2005): 105; Tinker (2004): 540; Duflo (2004):

10; Horowitz (2008): 18; Beaman et al. (2010); and Michailova and Melnykovska (2009) though they acknowledge that the findings from their analysis 'should be considered very critically' and that 'no firm conclusions can be drawn' (Michailova and Melnykovska (2009): 1, 13).

30 The authors argue as follows: 'We think this is because women are more averse to the risks of violating political norms and because gender discrimination makes violating institutional norms a riskier proposition for women than men (or: 'women are differentially impacted by these risks and thus feel greater pressure to conform to existing political norms about corruption' (Esarey and Chirillo (2013): 362)). Where corruption is stigmatized, women will be less tolerant of corruption and less likely to engage in it compared to men. But if 'corrupt' behaviors are an ordinary part of governance supported by political institutions, then there will be no corruption gender gap' (Esarey and Chirillo (2013): 383-384).

31 In this respect, see also the study of Breen et al. (2015) that focuses on bribery within the business world using the World Bank's Enterprise Surveys that document firms' (self-reported) experiences of corruption, as well as information on firms' characteristics and the business environment. While concluding that 'women in business are less corrupt' it also reports that 'cultural and institutional variables moderate the effect of gender on corruption' and that '(the) effect of female ownership is much greater under democracy or high rule of law than under autocracy or low rule of law, confirming our expectation that risk aversion is an important factor and that gender matters more in countries where the threat of detection is greater and punishment is more likely' (Breen et al. (2015): 15-17).

32 Yet another study on the Indian state of Andra Pradesh and focusing on the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Afridi et al. (2013)) points into another direction: corruption and sub-standard administration of the Act are more likely to occur in village councils reserved for women in the early stages but declines during the tenure of the female sarpanch (Afridi et al. (2013): 34). They also find that female leaders generate governance dividend once they have experience (Afridi et al. (2013): 7, 24-25, 28-29, 35). According to the authors, this 'highlights the need for capacity building and institutional support to make women's political participation and affirmative action policies more effective' (Afridi et al. (2013): 8, 35).

33 For example in relation to political parties, the same source states: 'in reality, the nature of parties in Burundi is highly problematic: they are weak and poorly institutionalised, and the dynamics of dominant party rule weaken the possibility of enhanced accountability mechanisms between elected representatives and constituencies of voters' (Domingo et al. (2012): 15). In the case of Nigeria, the authors refer to political parties that 'are patronage-based and reflect deep ethnic and regional tensions, which shapes the agendas they pursue and opportunities for promoting women's concerns' (Domingo et al. (2012): 17-18).

34 See e.g. CEDAW Committee General Recommendation No. 23 (16th session, 1997); Duflo (2004): 10; Tinker (2004); 531, 541; Bari (2005): 3; Waterhouse and Neville (2005): 10, 13-15, 42-43; Dahlerup (2005): 152; Schwindt-Bayer (2006): 20; Greenberg and Zuckerman (2006): 3; EASSI and International Alert (2008): 16-18; Pedwell (2008): 26; Ballington (2008): 18; Horowitz (2009): 12, 40; Eerdewijk et al. (2009): 38; Ospina (2010): 20-21; Alcântara Costa (2010): 25; Palmieri (2010): 10-24; Pande and Ford (2011): 26; UNDP and NDI (2011): 5-10; EASSI and International Alert (2012): 44; Castillejo (2012): 4-5, 8; Domingo et al. (2012): 3-5; Mukankubito et Mihigo (2012): 35, 36, 38, 43; Markham (2013): 3, 8-9, 12-17; Moosa et al. (2013): 468, 470; Mansuri and Rao (2014): 61; De Silva de Alwis (2014): 3, 15, 29, 31; World Bank (2014): 159; GDN et al. (2015): 47-50. The literature shows also that the same issues are relevant when talking about women's participation in peace building and conflict resolution in (post) conflict states – see e.g. Popovic et al. (2010): 15-16.

8

Organisational matters related to gender mainstreaming

'Leadership has not consistently supported or prioritized gender mainstreaming in policy or operations, resulting in what has been widely described as 'policy evaporation'' (AfDB (2012): 32).

8.1 Introduction

Although many donors talk about mainstreaming gender into their development policies, the actual translation from policy to practice is often very weak. As Moser and Moser (2005) point out, 'turning to the implementation of gender mainstreaming, most efforts are considered inconsistent, and generally involve only a few activities, rather than a coherent and integrated process. Policy commitments to gender mainstreaming frequently evaporate in planning and implementation processes' (Moser and Moser (2005): 15).

This problem of 'policy evaporation' is due to a number of factors, such as: lack of expertise; insufficient resources; treating gender equality as a 'separate issue' (which actually marginalises the issue); insufficient feelings of ownership of the policy, often combined with a lack of accountability; and sometimes even organisational (male) resistance to the notion of gender equality.[1] The following paragraphs summarise what is known from other gender evaluations on these key institutional factors that have influenced the realisation of donor gender policies and gender mainstreaming in said policies.

8.2 Staffing matters

8.2.1 Role of management – commitment at the top

International gender evaluations and reports demonstrate that management has a key role in ensuring gender mainstreaming: '(it) can work, but it requires high-level leadership as well as technical and budgetary resources – it is not cost free' (World Bank (2007): 145). What is more, support from lower levels of management is also essential: 'Accountability and commitment at all levels, and leadership from senior and middle management, is essential to speed up progress towards gender equality' (Hunt (2004): 6).[2] Management has a role in creating the enabling environment and systematic approach that are necessary for change to occur and for ensuring support to gender equality.[3] This is also apparent from e.g. the OECD/DAC Resource book on concepts and approaches linked to gender equality of 1998, pointing out that '(if) leadership is clearly disinterested in progress on equality issues, it is highly unlikely that policy will go beyond a rhetorical stage. They must demonstrate that it is important through allocating resources, raising equality issues in other policy discussions and demanding progress from senior staff' (OECD/DAC (1998): 6).

Evaluations from a range of countries show that in practice this support was not consistently provided and '(donors) lack of accountability to gender equality policies is an ongoing and serious obstacle to ensuring that both women and men participate and benefit from development activities' (Hunt (2004): 6). Two main reasons are identified[4]:

- An overload of competing leadership and development priorities (from poverty reduction, private sector development to climate change) that tended to supplant gender equality, with gender falling 'to a relatively low position in the order of priorities, as a 'cross-cutting issue' to be attended to in niche sectors of education and health, but very much an optional and frequently forgotten issue in others'; and

- 'A lack of performance benchmarks or delivery standards to hold leaders accountable and a lack of accountability mechanisms to assess progress in policy implementation and achievement of desired outcomes' and to ensure that its gets adequate attention by middle management and staff.[5] Coherent management strategies for sustained implementation of gender mainstreaming were absent and while it was accompanied by a repertoire of tools, management has not supported these tools with adequate staffing or the required organisational changes, resources, or budgets. As a result, the implementation of gender mainstreaming largely became a 'voluntary exercise, dependent on the commitment and interest of individuals' (AfDB (2012): 48).[6] Or, as already stated back in 1998: 'when staff are not held accountable for action on issue of equality, there is little incentive for staff to act' (OECD/DAC (1998): 53).

8.2.2 The organisation of gender expertise

Evidence on what institutional arrangements for implementation of gender policies work best, has been inconclusive so far (ECG (2012): 7-8). Most aid organisations have (had) a small central team of gender experts in headquarters, that coordinates implementation of the gender equality strategy, plus gender 'focal points' in headquarters' departments and embassies or field offices.[7]

Issues identified with respect to the *central* focal points are[8]:

- They help to provide more specific sectoral gender expertise and allow for more direct interventions and cooperation, but rarely have the authority and seniority to realise effective integration of gender issues in other departments. Gender focal points in ministry departments are frequently staffed by juniors who are not gender experts, have limited experience and who have to deal with 'gender' in addition to other tasks;
- Gender advisers at central level may not be strategically located within the organisation and are overburdened with responsibilities and priorities other than gender mainstreaming. Moreover, their mandates often become diffuse since gender mainstreaming is everyone's responsibility – implying that no one seems to be accountable;
- They are remote from the design and implementation of the interventions they need to support and have difficulties in monitoring what is happening in practice.

Several evaluations also refer to decisions to disband gender departments, reduce or not replace gender specialists. Evidently, getting *more* staff was often unrealistic: reduced funding and lower administrative budgets called for making choices among the many priorities competing for attention. A common, though not always very successful, remedy has been to involve external consultants, especially in the design of interventions, but less so in implementation or M&E.[9]

Issues at *decentralised level*, meaning at embassy or field office level, mirror those at central level: time and capacity of staff vary from embassy to embassy but are 'a real challenge' as staffing is limited and with staff getting other tasks as well since gender is not always the main priority.[10]

Related to the need for specific gender expertise and commitment from the top, is a 'widely acknowledged need for *specific* mechanisms of accountability, rather than simply the general guidelines provided in policy statements. These include *incentives* for positive behaviour as well as appropriate sa*nctions*' (Moser and Moser (2005): 17). An often-cited meta-evaluation on gender mainstreaming by the African Development Bank (2012) suggests that if there is one thing we can learn from previous experiences, it is that accountability and incentive systems are essential for effectively mainstreaming gender within donor organisations. In the end 'mainstreaming should result in gender becoming everyone's business' (AfDB (2012): 51, 62).

8.2.3 Gender training

Many evaluations have observed that knowledge of gender equality is thinly spread within aid organisations. To address this caveat, training has been one of the standard approaches to raise the profile and practice of gender mainstreaming, particularly among non-gender specialists.[11] Apart from raising knowledge and skills, training was thought to help in changing negative attitudes to deal with gender issues (Moser and Moser (2005): 17).

Although '(there) is little assessment available of what type of training has been most effective for what purpose' (ECG (2012): 8), the overall picture of such, often short-term, training, is not very positive – though there are exceptions.[12] Such training has been judged as fragmented, too short to turn staff into 'gender experts', insufficiently targeted to the needs and functions of staff as a result of little needs assessment, not reaching the local field level, and susceptible to staff attrition. Moreover, unless made mandatory, it was difficult to get senior management and non-gender specialist operational staff to participate. As mentioned already in 1998 by OECD/DAC, while numerous training models were developed, it has been difficult to assess the effectiveness of gender training and what type of training is more effective (OECD/DAC (1998): 18). Moreover, obstacles regarding insufficient senior management support are not remedied by training (OECD/DAC (1998): 19).

8.3 Resource matters

8.3.1 Funding women's organisations

According to Kabeer (1999) '(the) project of women's empowerment is dependent on collective solidarity in the public arena as well as individual assertiveness in the private. Women's organizations and social movements in particular have an important role to play in creating the conditions for change and in reducing the costs for the individual' (Kabeer (1999): 457). And although it is widely acknowledged that women's funds and women's organisations have an important role to play in the achievement shifts in gender equality and women's empowerment, financial support for these institutions has been waning in the past decade. Between 2009-2010, DAC member countries allocated USD 24.8 billion to gender equality, but only 1.6% of that money (USD 410 million) was allocated to women's equality organisations, even though empirical results have shown that providing funding to these organisations is effective in general (Baliamoune-Lutz (2013): 3, 14; Rao and Kelleher (2005): 58). By 2011, this share had gone up to 2.2% of all gender equality-related funding by

DAC member countries, equalling an amount of USD 457 million (Cordaid and Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (2013): 34).

Furthermore, several researchers[13] point to the fact that ever since mainstreaming was written into the Beijing Platform for Action, donors have had the tendency to focus on gender mainstreaming at the expense of funding stand-alone interventions implemented by women's organisations. And more oft than not, donors prefer to channel whatever stand-alone funding they have through pooled funding, trust funds and large-scale multi-donor arrangements for reasons of efficiency and management. In turn, this has caused smaller, local NGOs and CSOs to be overlooked when applying for funding[14] (GENDERNET (2008); Mukhopadhyay et al. (2011): 27).

Another tendency that many donors have, is to fund short-term projects and programmes, whereas achieving gender equality requires long-term, sustainable commitments to partners and interventions (Hunt (2004): 2). Findings point to the need for a shift in funding patterns: providing medium to long-term, institutional support to women's funds and women equality organisations is perceived as an effective way of contributing to women's empowerment.[15] Because 'the donor tendency not to stick with anything for very long has had a negative impact on organisations working to change historical inequities that cannot be eradicated within a few years', such as achieving gender equality (Mukhopadyay et al. (2011): 30).

8.3.2 Gender instruments in the programme cycle

Drawing up a country and sector gender analysis or profile is often an obligatory step at the start of the programming cycle or when updating their multi-year country programmes or strategies for many aid organisations. In practice, however, such analyses were rarely done 'in a sufficiently detailed manner to allow effective and system-wide integration of gender issues'. They were often confined to particular sectors, such as health and education[16], and findings were 'rarely followed up during implementation or monitoring' (AfDB (2012): 75). Moreover, overall gender policies were not always reflected in the country portfolio that served to implement the country programmes.

With few exceptions, donor organisations have also prepared gender-related reference materials, manuals and handbooks together with checklists and guidelines that were to be used as screening tools. Their purpose was to ensure that gender policy requirements were followed through in programme and project design. In practice, however, most of these tools have failed: it was often a matter of choice to use them, they were applied in an *ad hoc* manner and people often stopped using them after a short period of time. They soon fell into the category of administrative rituals: they were too time-consuming and administrative and had little operational relevance.[17]

8.4 Monitoring and evaluation matters

Though M&E is considered crucial to see, as a minimum, whether women indeed have benefited from certain interventions, international experience in this area is not a happy story. It remains 'a stubbornly challenging area' with weaknesses in monitoring 'mirrored in evaluation, where inclusion and assessment of gender is generally lacking' (AfDB (2012): 43).[18] Gender equality is rarely systematically integrated into evaluative work and, with some exceptions, specific thematic evaluations of gender equality and women's rights have been relatively infrequent. As a result, it is difficult to know the effects on gender equality and people's lives or to know what works or not and to learn from good or failing approaches.[19]

The main issues with respect to M&E are the following: [20] results frameworks suffer from weak or unclear gender concepts (or are absent) and input, process oriented or quantitative output indicators dominate with difficulties experienced in identifying proper indicators for measuring impact and getting access to gender-disaggregated data. This contributes to weak evaluation frameworks and evaluations have had little choice but to report along those indicators and 'to focus on processes and organizational factors relating to policy implementation and mainstreaming. When they do report on results, evaluations tend to focus on: (a) women, one main reason being that gender mainstreaming is often misinterpreted as a focus on women; and (b) education and health because in this case it is easier to monitor and evaluate effects and because these areas offer 'relatively straightforward but narrow women-centered design and implementation opportunities' (AfDB (2012): 14, 63).

Notes

[1] See Moser and Moser (2005): 15-17; AfDB (2012): 49-52; Brouwers (2013): 16.

[2] See also Hunt and Brouwers (2003): 14; stating that evaluations reviewed at the time showed that 'the main obstacle about which there was consensus was their lack of accountability for gender equality commitments that are not embedded in general agency procedures, instruments and overall policy implementation monitoring systems'. Others noted that leadership and commitment were key factors in creating an enabling corporate culture (Hunt and Brouwers (2003): 50).

[3] See e.g. Aasen (2006): 5-6; Mehra and Gupta (2006): 16; Byron and Örnemark (2010): 20; ECG (2012): 7; AfDB (2012): 45; Verner Kristiansen ApS (2013): 35. According to Hunt and Brouwers (2003), '(within) donor agencies there needs to be greater accountability to gender equality policy and for main-streaming gender equality perspectives in general procedures. Although there are no simple ways to increase this accountability, leadership and commitment are essential, and overall agency plans have been useful for some agencies' (Hunt and Brouwers (2003): 57).

[4] See e.g. Moser and Moser (2005): 17; Rao and Kelleher (2005): 61; Roggeband (2009): 65, 72; AfDB (2012): 12, 44-47, 76; ECG (2012): 7; and Nanivazo and Scott (2012): 24. Ravazi (1997) refers to 'dogged resistance' experienced when bringing in gender into organisations and 'bureaucrats (often male) who seem at best indifferent but more often hostile to what they perceive to be irrelevant political incursions into their professional boundaries and personal lives' (Ravazi (1997): 1111).

[5] This was 'exacerbated by the lack of monetary and non-monetary incentives to encourage a sustaina-ble focus on gender mainstreaming processes and improving gender equality results' (AfDB (2012): 48). See also Rao and Kelleher (2003): 148 and IFAD (2010): 12. On this issue see also a study done by McKinsey and Company in 2012 among 235 major European companies in the area of gender diversity practices. It found, amongst others that 'a company's perceived commitment tends to dwindle further down the organization. So while 41 percent of companies said their CEOs were fully committed to improving gender diversity, only 25 percent felt the same about senior managers and vice-presidents, and 13 percent about middle managers. The closer to the front line, the less support there appears to be for gender diversity initiatives, suggesting companies still have considerable work to do to change attitudes within the organization' (McKinsey (2012): 11).

[6] See also Mukhopadhyay (2004): 98; Uggla (2007): 5; FINIDA (2009): 52; Roggeband (2009): 73; Moser and Moser (2005): 16; AfDB (2012): 76; Nanivazo and Scott (2012): 20, 24.

[7] See McGill (2013): 11; OECD (2008): 14; OECD (2009): 11; Roggeband (2009): 72.

[8] See e.g. Roggeband (2009): 70, 72; Moser and Moser (2005): 16; IFAD (2010): 11-12; AfDB (2012): 13, 44, 52; Aasen (2006): 6; Uggla (2007): 5, 22; OECD (2009): 61; OECD (2011): 55; Nanivazo and Scott (2012): 2, 10, 21; McGill (2013): 14; and Verner Kristiansen ApS (2013): 34, 36.

[9] See also OECD/DAC (1998), referring to '(a) general result of the reliance on consultants is a lack of continuity in the programme or project cycle (to ensure that issues and strategies identified at one point are followed up at later stages) and the absence of a solid 'institutional memory' about what works and why' (OECD/DAC (1998): 54).

[10] See e.g. Aasen (2006): 5; McGill (2013): 14; Nanivazo and Scott (2012): 8, 16-17; and Uggla (2007): 9.

[11] See AfDB (2012): 40; Roggeband (2009): 72; Woodford-Berger (2004): 68; Mukhopadhyay (2004): 96.

[12] See e.g. Hunt and Brouwers (2003); 50; Uggla (2007): 25; Moser and Moser (2005): 17; ECG (2012): 8; AfDB (2012): 13, 40-42, 75-76; and Mukhopadhyay (2013). On the positive side, Danida's e-learning course (together with its Gender Toolbox), which is mandatory for everyone including senior management, was considered particularly useful (OECD (2011): 30, 57). According to Hunt and Brouwers (2003), '(the) likelihood of training being applied to tasks increased when it was sector-specific, hands-on and/or directly linked to individual activities and contexts' (Hunt and Brouwers (2003): 51).

[13] See e.g. Eerdewijk & Dubel (2012): 501; Højlund Madsen (2012): 579.

[14] Another issue is 'donors' preference for channelling funding through English-speaking women's CSOs based in the country's capital city enables these groups to dominate the women's civil society agenda' (Castillejo (2012): 6).

[15] See e.g. Collinson et al. (2008): 38; Cornwall (2014): 24; Cordaid and Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (2013): 34; Moosa et al. (2013): 468-469.

[16] See e.g. Mehra and Gupta (2006): 4; Aasen (2006): 8; McGill (2013): 13; FINIDA (2008): 24; Brouwers (2013): 16.

[17] AfDB (2012): 13, 35, 38-39, 74-75.

[18] See also Hunt and Brouwers (2003) referring to a 1994 review of OECD which looked at the way in which women in development was handled as a cross-cutting theme in evaluations and found that 'limited attention had been given to women and gender issues in the evaluation studies reviewed, and that the evaluations themselves focused on outputs rather than impacts because agencies were only just beginning to develop methodologies for impact assessment' (Hunt and Brouwers (2003): 18). See also Hunt (2004): 'Many development activities lack gender responsive indicators and sex-disaggregated baseline data, and have limited monitoring information. These are serious constraints to assessing possible differences in participation, benefits and impacts between women and men. Where sex-disaggregated information is collected, this tends to focus on inputs and activities (such as participation of women in training, number of women in groups, or number of loans provided) rather than benefits and impacts (such as how women and men control or benefit from loans)' (Hunt (2004): 3).

[19] Moser and Moser (2005): 17-18. On this issue see also Brouwers (2013): 32.

[20] Other issues, though not typical for gender M&E, relate to the lack of mechanisms for sharing lessons and learning from others and that evaluation findings not necessarily translating into improved systems and practices. See e.g. Snyder et al. (1996): 1492; Moser and Moser (2005):17; Mehra and Gupta (2006): 12, 16, 24; Uggla (2007): 21-24; IFAD (2010): 12; Byron (2010): 14; NORAD (2011): 11; ECG (2012): 3-4, 8, 16, 29; AfDB (2012): 14, 21, 23, 42-43, 62-64, 77; Nanivazo and Scott (2012):18-20; Verner Kristiansen Aps (2013): 14-15; Brouwers (2013): 15, 17, 20, 28.

Annexes

Annex 1 About IOB

Objectives

The remit of the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) is to increase insight into the implementation and effects of Dutch foreign policy. IOB meets the need for the independent evaluation of policy and operations in all the policy fields of the Homogenous Budget for International Cooperation (HGIS). IOB also advises on the planning and implementation of evaluations that are the responsibility of policy departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Its evaluations enable the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation to account to parliament for policy and the allocation of resources. In addition, the evaluations aim to derive lessons for the future. To this end, efforts are made to incorporate the findings of evaluations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' policy cycle. Evaluation reports are used to provide targeted feedback, with a view to improving the formulation and implementation of policy. Insight into the outcomes of implemented policies allows policymakers to devise measures that are more effective and focused.

Organisation and quality assurance

IOB has a staff of experienced evaluators and its own budget. When carrying out evaluations it calls on assistance from external experts with specialised knowledge of the topic under investigation. To monitor the quality of its evaluations IOB sets up a reference group for each evaluation, which includes not only external experts but also interested parties from within the ministry and other stakeholders. In addition, an Advisory Panel of four independent experts provides feedback and advice on the usefulness and use made of evaluations. The panel's reports are made publicly available and also address topics requested by the ministry or selected by the panel.

Programming of evaluations

IOB consults with the policy departments to draw up a ministry-wide evaluation programme. This rolling multi-annual programme is adjusted annually and included in the Explanatory Memorandum to the ministry's budget. IOB bears final responsibility for the programming of evaluations in development cooperation and advises on the programming of foreign policy evaluations. The themes for evaluation are arrived at in response to requests from parliament and from the ministry, or are selected because they are issues of societal concern. IOB actively coordinates its evaluation programming with that of other donors and development organisations.

Approach and methodology

Initially IOB's activities took the form of separate project evaluations for the Minister for Development Cooperation. Since 1985, evaluations have become more comprehensive, covering sectors, themes and countries. Moreover, since then, IOB's reports have been submitted to parliament, thus entering the public domain. The review of foreign policy and

a reorganisation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1996 resulted in IOB's remit being extended to cover the entire foreign policy of the Dutch government. In recent years it has extended its partnerships with similar departments in other countries, for instance through joint evaluations and evaluative activities undertaken under the auspices of the OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation.

IOB has continuously expanded its methodological repertoire. More emphasis is now given to robust impact evaluations implemented through an approach in which both quantitative and qualitative methods are applied. IOB also undertakes policy reviews as a type of evaluation. Finally, it conducts systematic reviews of available evaluative and research material relating to priority policy areas.

Annex 2 Literature

Introduction

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The Dutch international policy for women's rights and gender equality is based on both rights-based arguments – women have the same rights as men – and instrumental considerations: equality and equal rights will lead to better development results. These instrumental arguments have prompted the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) to find out what is known of the premises underlying Dutch policies, and to find out if these premises can indeed be linked to the intended, promised changes in gender equality and women's rights. This report summarises the findings of a study of existing research, including academic publications, reviews, grey literature and evaluations about themes related to gender equality. It is part of a number of sub-studies of the policy evaluation on women's rights and gender equality conducted by IOB.

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